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Joint Inspection Unit

Evaluation of the scope, organization, effectiveness and approach of the work of the United Nations in mine action

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the members of the General Assembly the report of the Joint Inspection Unit entitled, "Evaluation of the scope, organization, effectiveness and approach of the work of the United Nations in mine action".

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EVALUATION OF THE SCOPE, ORGANIZATION, EFFECTIVENESS AND APPROACH OF THE WORK OF THE UNITED NATIONS IN MINE ACTION

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Geneva 2011

Executive Summary

Evaluation of the scope, organization, effectiveness and approach of the work of the United Nations in mine action

JIU/REP/2011/11

Background

As part of its programme of work for 2010, the Joint Inspection Unit conducted a review of the scope, organization, effectiveness and approach of the work of the United Nations in mine action; as requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 64/84 of 10 December 2009. The objective of the review is to provide member States with an independent perspective on the work of the United Nations in this area. It is expected that the review will also serve to inform the development of the new United Nations Inter-Agency Mine Action Strategy for the period 2011-2015.

Mine action encompasses several dimensions, all of which must be taken into account in order to address the full range of problems posed by landmine contamination. Five major "pillars" support mine action, namely: (a) advocacy; (b) mine risk education (MRE); (c) humanitarian demining, often referred to as "clearance"; (d) victim assistance; and (e) stockpile destruction. It is important to note that the wide range of diverse activities grouped under the concept of mine action makes it almost impossible for a single organization to perform successfully in all areas.

Mine action has evolved, and the centre of attention has changed: the focus, previously on casualty reduction, is now on the socio-economic impact on affected communities. Even though it took years of debate to incorporate mine action into development schemes, it is now widely accepted that mine action should be an integral part of country development plans, and the linkages between mine action and socio-economic development are clearly acknowledged. Mine action, therefore, is also a means towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

Main findings and conclusions

United Nations mine action coordination

The Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action (IACG-MA) is the main mechanism supporting inter-agency coordination of mine action activities within the United Nations system. Its composition includes 14 United Nations departments, agencies, programmes and funds that play a role in mine action programmes in over 30 countries and three territories.

- There is a need for stronger coordination. The results of the review indicate that the general division of roles and responsibilities within the IACG-MA is largely adequate. However, in spite of a joint United Nations policy, the broad definition of the roles and responsibilities of each IACG-MA member involved allows for different interpretations as to when exactly one agency's mandate ends and another begins. Historically, there appears to be some continuation of inter-agency competition, and the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) struggles to assert its leadership role within the United Nations family. UNMAS is formally accepted as the focal point for mine action, but in terms of operational relevance, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) (as implementing partner) now have considerable leverage. Cooperation is partly achieved through the various coordination and liaison groups that have been established. However, the effectiveness and efficiency of cooperation and coordination both at headquarters and in the field varies from case to case and is very much country dependent and personality driven. **The diversity of mine action-related activities and actors demands, overall, coordination and full adhesion to the principles of partnership.**

Policy and the Strategy

The principal framework for United Nations interventions in mine action is provided in the document entitled "Mine Action and Effective Coordination: The United Nations Inter-Agency Policy" (the Policy), and the United Nations Inter-Agency Mine Action Strategy: 2006-2010 (the Strategy). The United Nations mine action programmes take place either in a peacekeeping operation, in a humanitarian context, or as part of a development programme. Most mine action programmes are developed under the auspices of either UNMAS, in humanitarian emergencies and peacekeeping operations, or UNDP, for long-term capacity-building programmes, and are frequently executed with the support of UNOPS.

- **The Policy** refers to core competencies and defines the role, responsibilities and the activities to be performed by United Nations entities involved in mine action. However, in some cases, the actual activities undertaken by entities do not correspond exactly to the competencies and activities as reflected in the Policy. This issue is of special relevance in the case of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs.

- The United Nations system has tried to optimize the use of its resources and make the best use of the strengths and comparative advantages of each of the entities in the system. For example, while UNICEF is the leading entity for MRE, the role of UNDP is focused on economic development and capacity-building. However, **there is a gap between mine action and national health systems that is not addressed properly by the United Nations system. There is a need for a victim-assistance leading entity within the United Nations system.**

- **Mine action coordination** is performed in parallel with project management and/or implementation, and decisions regarding implementation, when undertaken or managed by a United Nations entity, should be determined by actual competencies on the ground. **The Inspectors believe that UNMAS is the focal point and main mine action coordinating entity, while recognizing its operational role in specific contexts such as emergency responses, peacekeeping and support to special political missions.**

- **The Strategy** for 2006-2010 focuses on the following four major strategic objectives:

  (1) Reduce death and injury by at least 50 per cent;

  (2) Mitigate the risk to community livelihoods and expand freedom of movement for at least 80 per cent of the most seriously affected communities;

  (3) Integrate mine action needs into national development, reconstruction plans and budgets in at least 15 countries;

  (4) Assist the development of national institutions to manage the threat of landmines/explosive remnants of war, and at the same time prepare for residual response capacity in at least 15 countries.

- Mine-action stakeholders recognize that progress has been made towards each of the strategic objectives. However, the challenge is to systematically measure this progress, as the strategic objectives are difficult to measure and do not meet the SMART criteria (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound). Furthermore, there is no reliable baseline data to quantify progress. Progress is uneven and context specific; while some countries have considerably advanced, others have seen negative trends in the evolution of some of the objectives.

- **A new United Nations strategy for the period 2011-2015** is being developed. It is hoped that it will assist the United Nations in further clarifying roles, responsibilities and division of labour among United Nations entities, including providing individual objectives for each entity involved. The present review includes some elements to be taken into consideration in the development and implementation of the new strategy.

Mine action funding

Funding for mine action between 1996 and 2009 was substantial and marked by constant growth in annual contributions. However, a recent trend over the last two to three years indicates a declining allocation of funding specific for mine action. Several mechanisms that channel funds for mine action are in place within the United Nations system; each of the main actors, namely UNMAS, UNDP and UNICEF, has established or manages specific funds. The Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Action (VTF) is a major instrument for channelling mine action funding, having received US$ 680 million since its establishment. It has been managed by UNMAS since 1998. The terms of reference of the VTF, as adopted in 1994, no longer reflect the reality on the ground and have not yet taken into account institutional changes or United Nations reform efforts in this area. There is dissatisfaction with the management of the Fund; key recipients and major stakeholders criticize its responsiveness, its transparency and associated overheads.

- Delays in the disbursement of VTF funds have been repeatedly cited as a cause of concern among implementing partners, NGOs and donors, and mine-affected countries. UNMAS is taking these concerns seriously and is currently addressing as matter of urgency the ways and means to ensure prompt and effective transfer of funds to the relevant parties.

- There is a widespread perception that a conflict of interest exists regarding the double and incompatible role of UNMAS as, on one hand, the VTF administrator, and on the other, as a direct beneficiary of the Fund. The administration of the VTF should be conferred to an independent entity, not involved in project management and/or implementation activities funded directly from the VTF, and a **governance mechanism, inclusive of relevant stakeholders, should be established**.

- Fees charged for the administration of the VTF should be revised with a view to increasing both transparency and efficiency.

Recommendations

➢ **Recommendation 1**

The Secretary-General, as Chairman of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB), in consultation with the executive heads of relevant United Nations system organizations involved in mine action, should appoint a focal point for victim assistance within the United Nations system. This entity should place particular emphasis on integrating victim assistance into national health systems when feasible, while considering the broader work, capacity-building and the international normative framework related to the rights of persons with disabilities and the role of the Inter-Agency Support Group on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

- **Recommendation 2**

  In the context of the preparation of the new strategy, the Secretary-General should establish a global baseline of reliable data while building on ongoing efforts, which should facilitate the systematic monitoring of progress and the final evaluation of actual results achieved towards the strategic objectives.

- **Recommendation 3**

  The Secretary-General, as Chairman of the CEB and in consultation with the executive heads of relevant United Nations system organizations involved in mine action, should initiate a transparent and inclusive process aimed at clarifying the terms of reference of UNMAS as well as the tasks and mandates of other actors, with a view to positioning UNMAS as the main mine action policy and coordinating entity in addition to its role as a focal point for United Nations mine action, while recognizing its operational role in specific contexts, such as emergency responses, peacekeeping and support to special political missions.

- **Recommendation 4**

  UNMAS, in its role as the focal point for mine action, should develop relevant training materials to strengthen the staff capacity, in particular for the common induction of new staff joining any of the United Nations funds, programmes and/or specialized agencies involved in activities related to mine action, paying particular attention to the important role played by non-United Nations entities.

- **Recommendation 5**

  UNMAS, in consultation with the IACG-MA, should develop an evaluation strategy establishing the framework for all types of evaluations, internal or external, including criteria for the systematic evaluation of the Strategy as well as of field activities when relevant.

- **Recommendation 6**

  The Secretary-General should revise the terms of reference of the Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Action, taking into account recent United Nations trust-fund reform efforts, relevant institutional changes and lessons learned from the experience with multi-donor trust funds, with a view to ensuring a more inclusive, transparent and independent governance of the Fund **as well as to** making its management more efficient and effective:

- **Recommendation 7**

  The General Assembly should request the Secretary-General to report on the implementation of the recommendations contained in the present report at its sixty-eighth session.

Contents

		Page
	Executive Summary	3
	Abbreviation	9
I.	Introduction	10
	Scope, objectives and methodology	10
II.	Mine Action: A global perspective of the problem and its impact	13
	A. Background	13
	B. Landmines and mine action	14
	C. Victim assistance	16
	D. Global funding for mine action	19
III.	United Nations mine action	22
	A. United Nations mine action actors	22
	B. The United Nations Policy	25
	C. The United Nations Strategy	27
	D. Development of a new strategy	31
IV.	Coordination	33
	A. Coordination within the United Nations and the cluster framework	33
	B. Coordination with donors	37
	C. Coordination with other actors	39
	D. The development of national capacity and transition to national ownership	41
	E. Monitoring and evaluation of mine action	45
V.	United Nations funding for mine action	47
	A. United Nations funding mechanisms for mine action	47
	B. The management of the Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Action	47
	C. Timely disbursement of Voluntary Trust Fund funds	50
	D. The use of unearmarked funds	52
	E. Programme support costs	54
	F. Towards an enhanced financial mechanism for assistance in mine action: the revision of the terms of reference of the Voluntary Trust Fund	55
Annexes		
I.	Sudan: A case study on United Nations Mine Action cooperation in the field	58
II.	Current resource capacities and programmes in mine action of UNMAS, UNDP and UNICEF	63
III.	Survey	64

IV. List of interviewees 65
V. World map of missions undertaken for the review 67
VI. Overview of action to be taken by participating organizations on JIU recommendations 68

Figures

1. Thematic contributions by the 25 largest donors, 2009 18
2. National and international funding for mine action, 1996-2009 20
3. Total casualties per year, 2000-2009 28
4. Casualties in most-affected countries, 2003-2009 28
5. Share of total projects and shortfall by region 38
6. Contributions to the Voluntary Trust Fund, 1998/99-2010/11 48
7. Major Voluntary Trust Fund donors, 2009-2010 49
8. Recipients of the VTF contributions 2010 49
9. Recipients of the VTF contributions 2011 50

Abbreviations

AA	administrative agent
AoR	areas of responsibility
APMBC	Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention
CEB	United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination
CERF	Central Emergency Response Fund
DHA	Department of Humanitarian Affairs
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations
ERW	explosive remnants of war
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GICHD	Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining
IACG-MA	Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
ICBL	International Campaign to Ban Landmines
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IED	improvised explosive device
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMAS	International Mine Action Standards
JIU	Joint Inspection Unit
IMAP	Integrated Mine Action Programme
MACCA	Mine Action Coordination Centre of Afghanistan
MASG	Mine Action Support Group
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MDTF	multi-donor trust fund
MRE	mine risk education
NGO	non-governmental organizations
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
OIOS	Office of Internal Oversight Services
OROLSI	Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions
OSAGI	Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women
PBF	Peacebuilding Fund
PSC	programme support cost
SCMA	Steering Committee on Mine Action
SMART	specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNMAO	United Nations Mine Action Office
UNMAS	United Nations Mine Action Service
UNODA	United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UXO	unexploded ordnance
VTF	Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Action
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

I. Introduction

Scope, objectives and methodology

1. As part of its programme of work for 2010, the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) conducted a review of the scope, organization, effectiveness and approach of the work of the United Nations in mine action. The General Assembly, in its resolution 64/84 of 10 December 2009, stressed the importance of cooperation and coordination in mine action, including the primary responsibility of national authorities and the supporting role of the United Nations and other relevant organizations. It also underlined "the need for a comprehensive and independent evaluation of the scope, organization, effectiveness and approach of the work of the United Nations in mine action".

2. In order to meet the General Assembly request for an independent evaluation, the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), as focal point for United Nations mine action, in consultation with the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action (IACG-MA), requested JIU to carry out the evaluation, given that its mandate covers all United Nations entities involved in mine action as members of the IACG-MA.[1] It should be noted that this is not a review of UNMAS but of the work of the United Nations system in mine action.

3. The objectives of the present evaluation are: to provide member States with an independent perspective on the performance of the United Nations in this area, and to inform the development of a new United Nations Inter-Agency Mine Action Strategy for the period 2011-2015. In carrying out the evaluation, the Inspectors looked into the approach, efficiency, effectiveness and coherence of the work of the United Nations in mine action, as set out in the United Nations Inter-Agency Mine Action Strategy for the period 2006-2010 (the Strategy), identified best practices and lessons learned and formulated recommendations with a view to strengthening the work and coordination among United Nations mine action actors.

4. **It should be noted that since the beginning of the United Nation's involvement in mine action, no comprehensive evaluation of its contribution to mine action has been undertaken.** The General Assembly request demands that a wide range of issues be covered by the review. In order to assess "the scope, organization, effectiveness and approach of the work of the United Nations in mine action", the following approach has been followed: (a) the scope of United Nations mine action is determined by the Strategy and the document entitled "Mine Action and Effective Coordination: The United Nations Inter-Agency Policy" (the Policy), which set the framework for United Nations interventions and are addressed in chapter II; (b) the organization of United Nations mine action is addressed in chapter II, where

[1] Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the World Food Programme (WFP), the World Health Organization (WHO), and the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), as well as the World Bank, which is an observer. In 2011, OSAGI was integrated into the new United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women.

main actors are described, and in chapter III on the coordination of diverse actors; (c) the effectiveness of United Nations mine action is assessed from a global perspective by looking into, inter alia, the progress achieved towards the strategic objectives included in the Strategy; and (d) the assessment of the approach is reflected in the various chapters of the report. The approach is a difficult concept to assess, given that it depends heavily on specific local contexts. However, reference is made to specific country examples when these have been considered relevant from a global perspective.

5. In accordance with the internal standards and guidelines of JIU, the methodology followed in preparing the present report included in-depth analysis of relevant documentation, a desk review, a portfolio review, interviews and field missions, and an online survey that was distributed to more than 200 concerned individuals. In selecting the specific field missions to be undertaken, consultations were held with an extensive number of United Nations and non-United Nations actors to determine the most relevant locations and entities to be included in the review. In this regard, it was considered important to have a balanced geographical sample of mine-affected countries, and missions were undertaken to locations in Europe, the Americas, Asia and Africa (see annex V).

6. The Inspectors conducted missions between January and June 2011 to United Nations headquarters and selected donor countries, and field missions to mine-affected countries where the United Nations is playing either a managing or supporting role in mine action, namely, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Colombia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Nicaragua and South Sudan. It was the intention of the authors to visit also Afghanistan and Nepal; however budgetary limitations, security and a general strike in Nepal, once the mission was scheduled, prevented the team from undertaking these field missions. The field missions undertaken included interviews and meetings with major local stakeholder groups, such as Governments of countries affected by anti-personnel landmines and other types of explosive remnants of war (ERW), United Nations entities involved in mine action, donor countries and civil society. Given the highly specialized nature of mine action, an expert consultant was tasked with specific assignments to support the review; the case study on South Sudan, attached as annex I and available on the JIU website, is his report of the mission undertaken with the JIU team. Following the internal procedures of JIU, comments from participating organizations on the draft report were sought and taken into account in finalizing the present report. Since the initial coordinator of the review left the JIU before the finalization of the report, another Inspector assumed that responsibility.

7. In accordance with article 11, paragraph 2, of the JIU Statute, the present report has been finalized after consultation among the Inspectors so as to test its conclusions and recommendations against the collective wisdom of the Unit.

8. To facilitate the handling of the report and the implementation of its recommendations and the monitoring thereof, annex VI contains a table indicating whether the report is submitted to the organizations concerned for action or for information. The table identifies those recommendations relevant for each organization, specifying whether they require a decision by the organization's legislative or governing body or can be acted upon by the organization's executive head.

9. The Inspectors wish to express their appreciation to all who assisted them in the preparation of this report, and particularly to those who participated in the interviews and so willingly shared their knowledge and expertise.

II. Mine action: A global perspective of the problem and its impact

A. Background

10. The first steps by the international community to regulate the use and transfer of landmines were taken within the framework of the Protocol on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Mines, Booby-Traps and Other Devices (Protocol II) of the 1980 Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects. As amended in 1996, the Protocol prohibits the use of remotely delivered anti-personnel mines without effective self-destructing or self-deactivating mechanisms. At the end of an armed conflict, States parties to Amended Protocol II are obliged to remove all mines laid by them. The Protocol entered into force in December 1998.

11. Nonetheless, Amended Protocol II does not provide for, nor has the Conference on Disarmament managed to agree on, a comprehensive and total ban on anti-personnel mines. International civil society and a small group of like-minded countries, concerned by the humanitarian consequences of the use of anti-personnel mines, decided to push further the efforts towards a total ban of this indiscriminate weapon. As a consequence, the negotiations preceding the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, also known as the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC), were primarily driven by humanitarian concerns, rather than military and disarmament considerations. The Convention was then negotiated in a free-standing process outside the traditional multilateral disarmament forums.

12. In October 1996, a first conference was held in Ottawa, receiving the support of 50 Governments, the United Nations, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL), among others. On the same occasion, it was decided that a treaty prohibiting the use, stockpiling, production and transfer of anti-personnel mines and their destruction should be opened for signature. At the 1997 Oslo Conference, formal treaty negotiations were concluded and the APMBC was formally adopted on 18 September 1997. The Convention entered into force on 1 March 1999. The Secretary-General acts as its depositary. As of September 2011, there were 156 ratifications or accessions to the Convention.

13. Civil society organizations played a very important role along this process, and ICBL was doubtlessly a major driving actor. It was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1997 for its advocacy campaign to put the landmine issue on the agenda of the international community. The interaction among governments, international organizations and civil society was characterized by open cooperation to the extent that the negotiations leading to the APMBC, also called the "Ottawa process", are still often cited as a "new model of diplomacy".[2]

[2] Rosy Cave, "Disarmament as humanitarian action? Comparing negotiations on anti-personnel mines and explosive remnants of war", in *Disarmament as Humanitarian Action. From Perspective to Practice*, United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, John Borrie and Vanessa Martin Randin, eds. (United Nations publication, Sales No. GV.E.06.0.9), pp. 55 and 63.

B. Landmines and mine action

14. Since late in the 1980s, the words "mine" or "landmine" have been used to refer primarily to anti-personnel landmines — the weapon system banned from use by the APMBC — yet such systems are but one type of the increasingly varied range of weapons on which mine action focuses. There is a growing lexicon of terms, such as unexploded ordnance (UXO), ERW, abandoned explosive ordnance, explosive ordnance, cluster munition (and submunition), and improvised explosive device (IED). However, the distinction between landmines and other types of explosive devices usually does not apply to the daily work on the ground.[3] Although they represent different types of threat, the problems posed and the impact on socio-economic activities of affected communities are analogous to those of landmines.

15. "Mine action refers to all those activities aimed at addressing problems faced by civil societies as a result of landmine contamination. The essence of mine action, however, is not about weapons, but about people. Its objective, though technical in practice, is humanitarian and developmental in consequence."[4] The IMAS define mine action as "activities which aim to reduce the social, economic and environmental impact of landmines and ERW, including cluster munitions."[5]

16. Mine action encompasses several dimensions, all of which must be taken into account in order to address the full range of problems posed by ERW contamination. As defined in the IMAS, five major "pillars" support mine action; these are: (a) advocacy, (b) mine risk education (MRE); (c) humanitarian demining, often referred to as "clearance", which includes all technical activities required during the clearance process (i.e. survey, mapping, marking, clearance); (d) victim assistance, which includes physical and psychological rehabilitation and reintegration; and (e) stockpile destruction.

17. It is important to note that the wide range of diverse activities grouped under the concept of mine action makes it almost impossible for a single organization to perform successfully in all areas. This fact, together with the maturity of the sector, has led different organizations to specialize in one or several of these components. The United Nations system has tried to optimize the use of its resources and make the best use of the strengths and comparative advantages of the different entities that form the United Nations system. The civil society, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and national Governments are also key actors; this implies that partnership, cooperation and coordination are key concepts in mine action.

18. Past mine action has provided some good examples of cooperation among relevant stakeholders at the international level, such as the development of standards for humanitarian mine clearance issued by the United Nations first in 1997, which guide the planning, implementation and management of mine action programmes. Updated in 2000 and broadened beyond clearance operations, they include other components of mine action, such as MRE, survey and training, and stockpile destruction. In order to reflect these changes they were renamed as IMAS. They are reviewed periodically by the mine action community.

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[3] For relevant terms and definitions in the context of mine action please refer to the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS), available from www.mineactionstandards.org/.

[4] Report of the Secretary-General on assistance in mine clearance (A/53/496), para. 7.

[5] A Guide to International Mine Action Standards, appendix 2, p. 177

19. As of September 2010, 66 States were believed to be affected by landmines, as well as seven areas not internationally recognized; approximately 3,000 km^2 of land worldwide was believed to be contaminated with mines. Casualties are at a level far below earlier estimates, with recorded casualties in 2009 amounting to fewer than 4,000 worldwide. The total number of casualties has steadily decreased from about 8,000 in the year 2000 to less than half that in 2010. It is important to note that this is an aggregate trend, and that in some countries the number of victims has increased. In almost all cases, the increases have been due to specific circumstances. Overall, this is a very positive achievement, and evident proof that the efforts of the international community are generating results.

20. Interested civil society organizations and coalitions, such as ICBL, followed by international organizations and governments, raised awareness of the landmine problem, positioning it among the top priorities on the public agenda in the late 1990s. At that time, there was a focus on victims as the most visible impact of landmines and other ERW. Not only are their situations tragic and a source of existential difficulties for relatives and families, but they also affect the entire socio-economic development of a country. Landmine survivors need intensive long-term assistance (in most cases for the rest of their lives), care, and support before reintegration, which is often not accessible or cannot be afforded by most of them. Victims are often marginalized, in particular when they already belong to vulnerable groups, living in post-conflict countries with limited resources and facing competing priorities.

21. The Inspectors would like to stress that each single casualty counts and is a very dramatic occurrence; however, from a global perspective, the number of casualties resulting from mines and ERW is not significant when compared to other global threats, such as malaria, HIV/AIDS or others. This fact, inter alia, is one of the factors that have contributed to the loss of visibility of the landmines issue in the international global media.

22. The nature of mine action has evolved since 1993, and so have the expectations of donors. The centre of attention has changed: the emphasis, previously on humanitarian aspects, is now on the socio-economic impact on affected communities. The purpose of mine action is to recreate for affected communities a safe environment conducive to normal life and development.

23. Landmines have an impact on agricultural land, water canals and roads; thus, they can disrupt markets and production, prevent the delivery of government services, impede the return of refugees or serve as a physical inhibitor to economic reconstruction and development, to name only a few of the many negative indirect consequences of the presence or even the suspicion of the existence of landmines.[6]

24. A case study from Mozambique, for example, concludes that mine contamination in that country heavily affects not only the level but also the depth of poverty. In addition, the more intense the mine contamination, the stronger the decrease in the daily per capita consumption. The study therefore identifies a statistically significant causal effect of war on poverty and consumption even

[6] Gregory L. Bier, "The economic impact of landmines on developing countries", *International Journal of Social Economics*, vol. 30, No. 5 (2003), pp. 655-656.

several years after the ceasefire.[7] Similarly with cluster munitions, a study published in 2008 focusing on the economic impact in Lebanon states that during 2006-2008, economic losses between US$ 33 million and $122 million directly resulted from the spread of cluster munitions (including the cost of agricultural production, death and injury). The greatest costs fall heavily on individuals and families.[8]

25. Even though it took years of debate to incorporate mine action into development schemes, now it is widely accepted that mine action should be an integral part of country development plans, and the linkages between mine action and development are clearly acknowledged. Mine action is therefore also a means toward the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs); as reflected in the IACG-MA Policy: "the United Nations encourages all actors to integrate mine action into their development programmes, strategies and budgets ... [and] promotes the mainstreaming of mine action into national development plans and processes to advance the Millennium Development Goals ... ."[9] In the same direction, the Strategy for 2006-2010 also promotes achievement of the MDGs through mine action. Some affected countries, such as Afghanistan and Cambodia, have made mine action a pillar of their national MDGs.[10] In Lao People's Democratic Republic, where the presence of UXO not only destroys lives but hinders socio-economic development (the correlation is apparent in 41 of the 46 poorest districts contaminated by UXO), a localized MDG 9 was introduced to reduce the socio-economic impact of UXO.

26. This shift away from the initial view on mine action is not without resistance, as some NGOs deplore the dilution of the principles of mine action and complain about the increasing subordination to socio-economic impact, being of the view that such a shift reduces the focus on international legal obligations, such as the need to fully clear contaminated areas, as contained in the APMBC.

C. Victim assistance

27. The APMBC set a precedent with the introduction of a legal obligation to assist victims. In its preamble, States parties expressed their will "to do their utmost in providing assistance for the care and rehabilitation, including the social and economic integration of mine victims". Article 6 further refines this statement, in particular in its paragraph 3, indicating that "each State Party in a position to do so shall provide assistance for the care and rehabilitation, and social and economic integration, of mine victims".

28. The scope of victim assistance includes data collection, medical care, physical and psychological rehabilitation, including assistive devices, and access to

[7] Ouarda Merrouche, "Landmines and poverty: IV evidence from Mozambique", *Peace Economics, Peace Science and Public Policy*, vol. 14, No. 1 (2008), pp. 7 and 10.

[8] Greg Crowther, *Counting the Cost: The Economic Impact of Cluster Munition Contamination in Lebanon* (London, Landmine Action, 2008), pp. 3-6 and 17-25.

[9] Mine Action and Effective Coordination: The United Nations Inter-Agency Policy, 6 June 2005, para. 25.

[10] Cambodia also has a specific MDG 9 focusing on demining, UXO and victim assistance. Goal 9 of Afghanistan, on enhancing security, deals with demining and stockpile destruction; for more information, see UNDP, *Vision 2020-Afghanistan Millennium Development Goals: Annual Progress Report 2008*, p. 28.

education, employment and full participation in socio-economic life, and should be supported by relevant laws and policies.

29. In 1998, the World Health Assembly declared that the impact of anti-personnel mines is a public health problem, and requested Governments of mine-affected countries to include in national health plans prevention mechanisms to avoid anti-personnel mine accidents, and assistance to victims. At the first Meeting of States parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, held in Maputo in 1999, State parties recognized that "anti-personnel mines represent a major public health threat" and that victim assistance must be integrated into broader public health strategies to ensure not only emergency and short-term care but also longer-term related issues. [11] At this same meeting, the Strategic Framework for Victim Assistance, also known as the Maputo Strategy, was endorsed.

30. The Framework was based on seven principles, namely: non-discrimination of victims; an integrated and comprehensive approach; participation of all relevant actors; national ownership; transparency and efficiency; a sustainable development approach; and the empowerment of victims. These principles set the framework for the work of the Standing Committee on Victim Assistance and Socio-Economic Reintegration, established in 1999. The said Committee has played an important role since then in advancing the achievement of objectives in the area of anti-personnel mines, helping States parties to identify and better understand victim-assistance issues working in relationship with United Nations entities and NGOs.

31. At the Nairobi Summit on a Mine-Free World, held in 2004, States parties formally adopted principles on victim assistance, and it was acknowledged that victim assistance should be part of the overall public health systems and human rights frameworks of mine-affected countries. The Nairobi Action Plan 2005-2009 was adopted; it committed States parties to do their utmost to establish and enhance health-care services needed to respond to the needs of anti-personnel mine victims. In this context, the Inspectors would like to recall action No. 36 of the Nairobi Action Plan, which requests State parties to "act upon their obligation under Article 6(3) to promptly assist those State Parties with clearly demonstrated needs for external support".

32. The 2008 Convention on Cluster Munitions includes comprehensive victim assistance provisions drawn from lessons learned from the implementation of the APMBC. It includes a definition of a "victim", which is not only the affected individual but also his or her family and community. The Convention makes the provision of assistance to victims a formal requirement for all States parties with respect to victims under their jurisdiction and calls for international assistance, which should be rights based in accordance with other relevant national strategies, including for disability and development.

33. At the Cartagena Summit on a Mine-Free World, held in 2009, it was recognized that there had been improvements and gains in the area of victim assistance, although these were mainly process related. However, the challenge to demonstrate improvements in the quality of life of mine victims still remains.

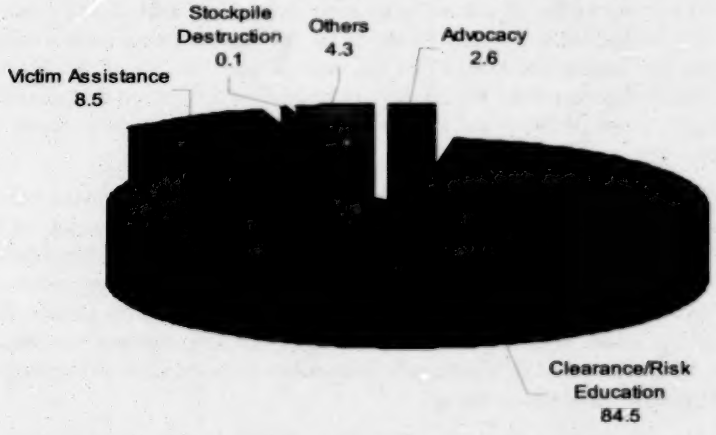
[11] Maputo Declaration (APLC/MSP.1/1999/1, part II), para. 15.

34. Victim assistance is also part of the Strategy of the United Nations; however, it is only included as part of one of the four strategic objectives, which are discussed in more detail in chapter III, section C. Specifically, under strategic objective 3 on the "integration of mine action needs into national development and reconstruction plans and budgets in at least 15 countries", the major relevant activities include supporting efforts to ensure the rights of landmine/ERW survivors within the context of national programmes and facilities for persons with disabilities, and advocating for increased resources and support to persons with disabilities, including landmine/ERW survivors.

35. In addition to the above international law instruments, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is of particular relevance in recognizing the human rights of people with disabilities, which also apply to victims of anti-personnel mines. The Convention is a paradigm shift in the treatment of persons with disabilities, since it moves from a medical or charity perspective to a rights-based approach, ensuring that persons with disabilities, including victims of landmines, can participate in decisions that affect their lives and can seek redress for violations of their rights. The Convention provides a framework for addressing the needs of survivors and ensuring the full realization of their human rights and respect for their inherent dignity.

36. The Inspectors conclude that the international legal framework is quite clear and comprehensive, and its development can be considered an unprecedented success story of cooperation among States parties, civil society, including victims themselves, NGOs and the United Nations family.

Figure 1: Thematic contributions by the 25 largest donors, 2009
(percentage)



Source: ICBL, *Landmine Monitor*, 2010; www.the-monitor.org.

37. However, victim assistance receives less than 10 per cent of overall mine action funding (see figure 1). Out of 33 donors, only 15 reported having supported victim assistance in 2009.[12] Serious concerns about the lack of improvement in the

[12] International Campaign to Ban Landmines, *Landmine Monitor 2010*, pp. 48-49.

quality of landmine survivors' daily lives since the Nairobi Summit, as expressed, for example, by Handicap International, underlines the need for increased national and international efforts in this area. The true overall level of resources allocated to victim assistance has not been determined, and many donors have indicated that their priority has moved from victim assistance-dedicated funding to other parts of their aid programmes, particularly those for long-term assistance to all survivors irrespective of the cause of the disability.

38. Though some progress has been achieved in certain countries, it is uneven, and in most cases victim assistance is relegated in the scale of national priorities. However, there are best practices worth mentioning, such as the Presidential Program for Mine Action (Programa Presidencial para la Acción Integral contra Minas Antipersonal) launched by the Government of Colombia. It is structured around the major components of mine action and, under the specific pillar of victim assistance, a new national forum for the discussion of victims' needs was launched during the field mission undertaken by the Inspectors to Colombia. The Inspectors noted the involvement of all national and international stakeholders and partners, including victims and representatives of the civil society. As already discussed, victim assistance encompasses a wide range of interrelated activities, which take place in most cases under the responsibility of various entities or ministries at the national level. Only through the open and determined participation and coordination of all relevant actors at the national level, including international partners present locally, can victim assistance be successfully provided.

39. The promise made to victims contained in the various international legal instruments must be translated into facts and tangible realities. During their field missions the Inspectors discussed with national authorities the issue of victim assistance, and visited different victim rehabilitation centres in mine-affected countries. They observed that although "mine action is about people", often people, in particular victims, are placed low on the scale of priorities and resource allocation. **The Inspectors conclude that there is still much to do to enhance victim assistance and that, despite the evolution of the international legal framework and the obligations imposed, these are still far from being met.** As an example, during the Inspectors' field mission to Cambodia, they visited a demining site (Kok Romeat commune, Thmar Puok district) and a rehabilitation centre (Svay Dong Kum commune, Siem Reap district, Siem Reap Province). There, they were informed that the rehabilitation centre, currently supported by Handicap International, might be forced to close down, as the unpredictable financing made it difficult to continue paying staff salaries, the annual estimated cost of which was less than US$ 10,000. The Inspectors would like to call for a higher involvement of the United Nations system in the field of victim assistance, and recognize that this cannot simply be left to mine action alone.

D. Global funding for mine action

40. Funding for mine action between 1996 and 2009 was substantial and marked by constant growth in annual contributions (see figure 2). However, a recent trend over the last two to three years (2008-2010) indicates that the amount of funding allocated to mine action has been increasing at a slower rate, or even declining. This assessment is supported by various studies, such as a donor study commissioned by

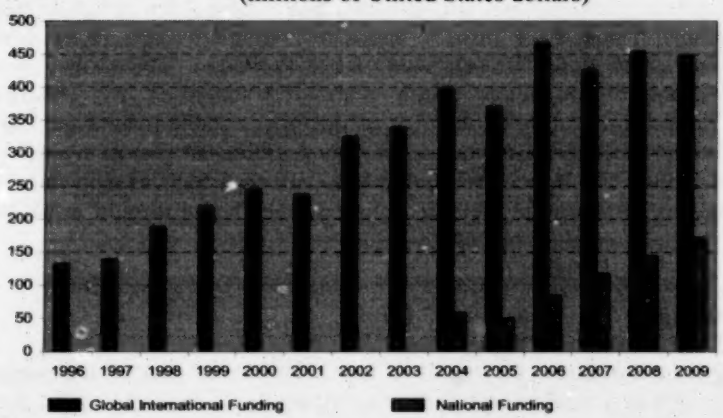
the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD).[13] This was also confirmed by the Inspectors during interviews with donor countries. It should be noted that according to Landmine Monitor 2011, in 2010, 31 donors contributed US$ 480 million in international support for mine action in 57 affected States and areas, an increase of 8 per cent from 2009.

41. In addition to donors' own individual political strategies, donor funding is influenced by the international public agenda, as well as, in the current economic context, by the need to make the most efficient use out of the limited resources available. Delivering specific results is a pressing need for all donors interviewed, and the return on investments made has become a key factor in international cooperation, mine action is not an exception in this regard. This factor has also contributed to the evolution of mine action and its integration into broader contexts, such as socio-economic development, as described in previous paragraphs.

42. Based on interviews conducted by the Inspectors and the conclusions of several studies, there is no indication that mine action funding will increase in the foreseeable future. On the contrary, the downward trend continued in 2010 but at a slower pace. There is no confirmation that donors having reduced their funding will recover their past level. There are many reasons for this slow but predictable trend towards gradually reduced funding levels: lack of clarity and progress on clearance, the lack of value for funds invested and competition for limited funding.[14]

43. Donor responses to the JIU survey conducted in May/June 2011 revealed that most donors expect funding for mine action to decrease for the years 2011-2015. This view is shared by most United Nations officials and NGO representatives interviewed. The available data on the amount of international contributions to mine action reveals in quantitative terms that overall, a certain plateau has been reached and it is likely that global funding for mine action has reached its peak, and will diminish in the foreseeable future.

Figure 2. National and international funding for mine action, 1996-2009
(millions of United States dollars)



Data gathered from ICBL, *Landmine Monitor*, 2000; 2005-2008; 2010.

[13] Jean Devlin, "Mine action funding: trends, modalities and future prospects — results of a survey of donor countries carried out in May-June 2010" (Geneva, GICHD, 2010).

[14] Ibid., p. 23.

44. The most significant change in donor patterns in the past 10 years has been a shift from focusing on the object, namely, the anti-personnel mine as an indiscriminate weapon and its control, to minimizing the impact on affected populations and survivors. Furthermore, donor policy is now marked by pragmatism. Without actually promoting the notion of a mine-safe world as opposed to the ultimate aim of a mine free world, some donors' policies do not place emphasis on the original call of the APMBC.[15]

45. The results of the JIU survey for donor behaviour are very similar to those included in the GICHD donor study, revealing the following regarding funding trends and prospects:

- Impact achieved and follow-up are the most important factors for donors when deciding on resource allocation; these factors are followed by overhead costs associated with projects, reporting requirements and donor visibility with respect to contributions made.
- Donors do not anticipate any major changes in the way they do business, in particular regarding funding channels, with a preference for bilateral funding.
- Integrating and mainstreaming mine action projects into broader contexts, such as national development programmes, is seen as one of the preferred mechanisms to demonstrate the impact achieved.
- Donors remain confident and generally satisfied with the partners they work with, although they tend to apply greater conditionality to their grants.
- Uncertainty about what is left to be done is a cause of concern. Cost estimates should be revised to more realistic levels. Donors would like to see a better identification of magnitudes of needs.
- The commitment of affected countries to build national capacities, and in the longer term assume the residual responsibility, is key when deciding on funding for mine action.

[15] Ibid., p. 12.

III. United Nations mine action

A. United Nations mine action actors

46. United Nations mine action is conducted on the basis of resolutions of the General Assembly and Security Council. It is guided by the relevant international instruments prohibiting or restricting the use of landmines and addressing ERW, the general principles of international humanitarian law on the conduct of war and the protection of civilians, and international human rights instruments such as the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; additional information on the legal framework is provided on the JIU website.

47. The issue of mine action has been on the agenda of the General Assembly since 1993, and has been considered annually since then. Despite General Assembly resolution 48/7 of 19 October 1993, which called for coordination of the United Nations response to the global landmine crisis, various parts of the United Nations system continued to independently provide and/or manage mine action services for the next four years. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), the Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA), UNDP and UNICEF all had dedicated mine action resources.

48. Prior to the transfer of responsibilities to DPKO, DHA was engaged in several important mine action initiatives; additionally, UNICEF had developed comprehensive mine-awareness guidelines and was at the forefront of mine risk education and advocacy. Because the extensive use and destructive power of landmines had become critical items on the international agenda, the Secretary-General decided the issue should be addressed in the dual context of peacekeeping and humanitarian operations (A/53/496, para. 5). The Secretary-General declared that DPKO was the lead agency for mine action because of its existing operational capacity in post-conflict countries and, since October 1997, DPKO has been serving as the focal point within the United Nations system for all mine-related issues and activities.

49. UNDP has for years played a major role in worldwide mine action through the management of multi-donor funded operations that are also designed to build national capacities for demining. UNDP currently supports and facilitates the management of mine action programmes in 38 countries, typically becoming involved once the emergency phase is over and when building national capacity becomes of paramount importance. In specific circumstances UNDP, at the request of authorities in mine-affected countries, manages some or all of the elements of mine action programmes. UNDP addresses the landmine problem from a development perspective and promotes the mainstreaming of mine action into national and sector development plans and programmes.

50. Based on the reform programme presented by the Secretary-General in 1997, coordination in mine action and its management structure were strengthened. For this purpose, UNMAS was created within DPKO to take over the lead from the then DHA and to serve as the focal point for mine action within the United Nation system. The initial mandate of UNMAS comprised ensuring greater interaction between the United Nations and its partners and the work of the international community. More importantly, UNMAS was tasked to ensure "an effective, proactive and coordinated response by the United Nations in any country contaminated by landmines". The

General Assembly, in its resolution 53/26, welcomed the creation of and the mandate given to UNMAS in 1998.

51. UNMAS, located in the Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions within DPKO, has the following core areas of responsibility:

- Ensuring an effective, proactive and coordinated United Nations response to landmines and ERW through collaboration with other United Nations departments, agencies, funds and programmes.
- Coordinating the development and monitoring of the United Nations mine action policy and strategy.
- In peacekeeping and emergency settings, UNMAS establishes and manages mine action coordination centres in mine-affected countries, plans and manages operations, mobilizes resources, manages the Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Action (VTF) and sets mine action priorities in the countries and territories it serves.
- UNMAS coordinates United Nations advocacy in support of international legal instruments related to landmines and ERW and the human rights of persons affected by them.

52. In addition to the major mine action actors within the United Nations system, namely UNMAS, UNDP and UNICEF, UNOPS is a principal service provider and implementing partner, offering project management and logistics services for programmes and projects managed or funded by the United Nations, international financial institutions, regional and subregional development banks or host governments. It identifies and recruits international technical experts and contracts them for mine action services. It can also, as appropriate, implement mine action programmes in collaboration with concerned partners. However, according to UNMAS, UNOPS has for several years had a policy indicating that it will not undertake mine action activities independently.

53. United Nations mine action is also supported by the following United Nations organizations and other entities: FAO, OCHA, OHCHR, UNHCR, WFP, WHO, UNODA, and the World Bank. In addition, a variety of intergovernmental, international and regional organizations, as well as international financial institutions, support mine action by funding operations or providing services to individuals and communities affected by landmines and ERW.

54. UNODA is tasked with supporting the Secretary-General, in his capacity as the Chief Administrative Officer of the United Nations system, in the fulfilment of specific United Nations responsibilities related to the implementation of the APMBC (for example, the collection of article 7 reports). According to the Policy, UNODA was to assume a number of responsibilities in the areas of coordination, capacity development, standards and quality management, resource mobilization, advocacy and information, promoting mine action as a disarmament activity. Yet the Office has not been involved in mine clearance, nor in related humanitarian, social or economic assistance activities; the analysis of the mandate shows that UNODA does not completely fulfil the said assigned tasks. In fact, the Implementation Support Unit, an entity that does not belong to the United Nations system and was

established by States parties to the APMBC in 2001,[16] largely took over the substantive work in the implementation of the Convention. In this context, the Inspectors stress the importance of promoting and advocating for the goals of existing international legal instruments, in particular those relevant to mine action; in their view, this endeavour, though part of the UNODA mandate, is not sufficiently fulfilled; UNODA is not actively participating in substantive discussions and it is a minor actor in mine action. While recognizing the work of UNODA in relation to the Coordinating Committee and the Bureau of the annual meetings of the APMBC, **the Inspectors noted that the role of UNODA is limited to conference management**.

55. WHO, within the United Nations inter-agency framework, is responsible for the development of appropriate standards and methodologies, as well as the promotion of health service capacity-building for sustainable victim assistance. The WHO plan of action is part of the portfolio for the mine action projects of UNMAS, and WHO was represented in assessment missions led by UNMAS. At the tenth Meeting of the States Parties to the Ottawa Convention, held in 2010, WHO, along with the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), launched the Community-Based Rehabilitation Guidelines, which aim at empowering persons with disabilities, including landmine survivors.[17] Through its integrated approach to public health, WHO also provides technical support at the national level, for example in the fields of trauma care or data collection, which also benefit survivors of landmines. However, the Inspectors could not find evidence of WHO mine action activities during the field missions they undertook. It would have exceeded the scope of the present review to evaluate the work of WHO at the national level in cooperation with ministries of health of affected countries and their country plans.

56. The United Nations has tried to use the strengths of the different funds, programmes and agencies to deal with the diverse aspects of mine action. While UNICEF is the leading entity for MRE, UNDP has focused on economic development and capacity-building; however, there is no United Nations entity leading victim assistance. As already discussed, it is commonly agreed that victim assistance should be part of national health systems. However, some consider this as a very peripheral issue within mine action. Many countries emerging from conflict situations do not have adequate — if any — national health systems to deal with victims. **The Inspectors conclude that there is a gap between mine action and national health systems which is not addressed properly by the United Nations system; in their view there is a need for a leading entity on victim assistance to bridge that gap.**

57. In this regard, the Inspectors welcome the recent establishment by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, OHCHR, UNDP, WHO, ILO and UNICEF of a multi-donor trust fund (MTDF) for disability, launched during the Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with

[16] "Implementation Support for the Convention on the Prohibition of Anti-Personnel Mines", paper circulated at the third Meeting of States Parties, Managua, 18-21 September 2001. Available from www.apminebanconvention.org/fileadmin/pdf/mbc/MSP/3MSP/3MSP_Fina_%20Report_ISU_en.pdf.

[17] See AP Mine Ban Convention Implementation Support Unit, "Landmine survivors to benefit from new rehabilitation guidelines developed by WHO and partners", press release, 2 December 2010. Available from www.apminebanconvention.org/fileadmin/pdf/mbc/MSP/10MSP/news/10MSP-PR-WHO-launch-2Dec2010.pdf.

Disabilities in December 2011. However, they regret that none of the entities participating in the Inter-Agency Support Group for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities has offered to become the United Nations lead agency for disability, which should include, inter-alia, leading mine victim assistance.

58. The United Nations system is just one actor in mine action that plays an important role; however, in certain contexts, such as advocacy, its role is unique. The United Nations is also in a privileged position to act as a knowledge-management and -sharing catalyst, for example as a forum facilitating open discussions inclusive of all relevant mine action actors, recognizing that much of the actual work, such as demining and mine-risk education, is carried out by NGOs, commercial contractors and, in some situations, by militaries that provide mine action services. The **diversity of mine action-related activities and actors demands, overall, coordination and full adhesion to the principles of partnership.**

59. The implementation of the following recommendation is expected to enhance the accountability in United Nations mine action, in particular in the area of victim assistance.

Recommendation 1

The Secretary-General, as Chairman of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB), in consultation with the executive heads of relevant United Nations system organizations involved in mine action, should appoint a focal point for victim assistance within the United Nations system. This entity should place particular emphasis on integrating victim assistance into national health systems when feasible, while considering the broader work, capacity-building and the international normative framework related to the rights of persons with disabilities and the role of the Inter-Agency Support Group on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

B. The United Nations Policy

60. The principal framework for United Nations interventions in mine action is provided in the document entitled "Mine Action and Effective Coordination: The United Nations Inter-Agency Policy" (the Policy); it was approved by the IACG-MA at the Principals' level on 6 June 2005. The Policy defines the vision and core commitments of the United Nations in mine action, outlines the legal framework within which the United Nations mine action takes place, elaborates the common positions deriving from the vision and describes the individual roles and responsibilities of the IACG-MA members It is also intended to clarify how decisions are made and how coordination is achieved among the IACG-MA members and with other stakeholders.

61. According to the Policy, the United Nations envisions a **"world free of the threat of landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW), where individuals and communities live in a safe environment conducive to development and**

where the needs of mine and ERW victims are met and they are fully integrated into their societies".[18] In line with the Policy, the IACG-MA members established a five-year strategy, which not only comprises the broad goals outlined in the Policy, but also includes the specific strategic objectives that the United Nations intends to achieve during the period. The scope of United Nations mine action is mainly determined by the Policy and the Strategy.

62. The United Nations is involved in mine action in different contexts, as reflected in the Policy. United Nations mine action programmes take place either in a peacekeeping operation, in a humanitarian context, or as part of a development programme. In some situations, for example in South Sudan, programmes may relate to more than one of these contexts. Most United Nations mine action programmes are developed under the auspices of either UNMAS (in humanitarian emergencies and peacekeeping operations) or UNDP (for long-term capacity-building programmes), and are frequently executed with the support of UNOPS. The United Nations supports mine action in over 30 of the more than 60 mine-affected countries and in three territories; eight of these programmes are implemented in the context of peacekeeping operations.

63. The Policy describes three different operational scenarios for programmes managed by the United Nations, including: (a) those established by a Security Council resolution, and which constitute a humanitarian intervention, usually led by UNMAS and centralized management in New York; (b) national programmes which are undertaken at the request of a government and usually decentralized through country-level management with a small headquarters team, often led by UNDP or UNICEF; and (c) emergency situations, which constitute a short-term intervention, usually led by UNMAS.

64. The Inspectors concur with the view of several officials interviewed who indicated that the current policy remains vague and unclear in certain areas and that it would be better known to all United Nations agencies on mine action roles and responsibilities, in particular at the field level. An example of overlapping mandates can be found in paragraphs 84 and 105 of the Policy; while paragraph 84 refers to the responsibility of UNMAS to coordinate the planning for the transfer of programme management responsibilities to national authorities, paragraph 105 indicates that "UNDP facilitates the United Nations effort to assist national authorities to develop national capacity... UNDP assists national authorities to prepare for an effective transition to national management". It is understood that UNMAS and UNDP operate in different contexts; however this is not always the case, such as in the example of Colombia, discussed below. The decentralized approach assumes a high-level of communication and effective information and coordination between the field and headquarters, in particular during the transition from a United Nations-managed to a United Nations-supported programme. During their interviews, the Inspectors ascertained that a wide range of stakeholders, including United Nations officers, believe that the United Nations should speak with a common voice — delivering as one — but fail to see this happened in practice; some specific examples can be found in subsequent paragraphs.

65. Additionally, **the Inspectors conclude that the core competencies and activities of United Nations entities involved in mine action, as reflected in the**

[18] Mine Action and Effective Coordination: The United Nations Inter-Agency Policy, para. 1.

Policy, do not correspond exactly with the actual activities undertaken by them. This issue is of particular relevance in the cases of WHO and UNODA, as described in previous paragraphs.

66. It is hoped that the new strategy will assist the United Nations in further clarifying roles and responsibilities of United Nations agencies. However, **the Inspectors are convinced that the roles and responsibilities, as well as the issue of strategic joint planning, should be dealt with in the context of an eventual revision of the Policy itself which, in their view, should include individual objectives for each entity involved.**

C. The United Nations Strategy

67. In 2006, the IACG-MA members adopted the five-year Strategy with the following overall goal: **"The UN will work with national authorities and in partnership with NGOs, the private sector, international and regional organisations and others, to reduce the humanitarian and socio-economic threats posed by landmines and explosive remnants of war, at which point the UN mine action assistance will no longer be necessary".**[19] The Strategy for 2006-2010 focuses on the following major strategic objectives:

1. Reduce death and injury by at least 50 per cent;
2. Mitigate the risk to community livelihoods and expand freedom of movement for at least 80 per cent of the most seriously affected communities;
3. Integrate mine action needs into national development and reconstruction plans and budgets in at least 15 countries;
4. Assist the development of national institutions to manage the landmine/ERW threat, and at the same time prepare for residual response capacity in at least 15 countries.

68. One approach to evaluating the effectiveness of United Nations mine action is to assess the progress in achieving the above strategic objectives. In the course of 2009 and 2010, the IACG-MA members developed an internal survey, sent to 49 mine action programmes that receive or have received support from the United Nations system, with a view to (a) measure the progress made towards these strategic objectives, and (b) elaborate the development of the new 2011-2015 strategy.

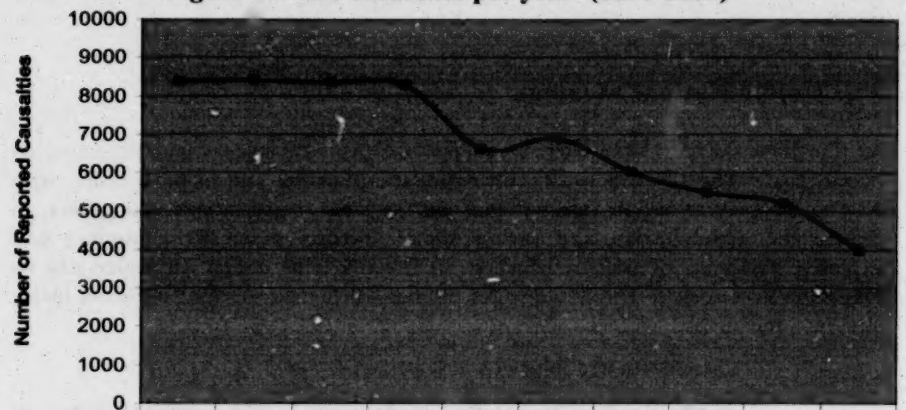
69. With respect to strategic objective 1 (reduce death and injury by at least 50 per cent), a significant decline in casualties can be noted since 2002, characterized by a constant annual reduction. Casualties decreased globally to the lowest number ever recorded since Landmine Monitor began reporting in 1999 (see figure 3). There has been a steady decrease in the number of reported casualties worldwide since 2006, when the number of reported casualties, according to Landmine Monitor, was 6,022. The latest figures for 2009 indicate a total number of reported casualties of 3,956, representing about a 35 per cent reduction in four years. Thus, to achieve the 50 per cent reduction as planned in the Strategy for the period 2006-2010 seems

[19] United Nations Inter-Agency Mine Action Strategy: 2006-2010, para. 14.

challenging. However, this simple calculation does not provide a full picture of progress towards the achievement of strategic objective 1.

70. There are considerable differences between countries in terms of the number of casualties. In 2010, 64 countries and territories reported accidents due to mine action contamination; however, about half of the victims were reported by only four countries, namely: Afghanistan, Colombia, Pakistan and Myanmar (see figure 4).

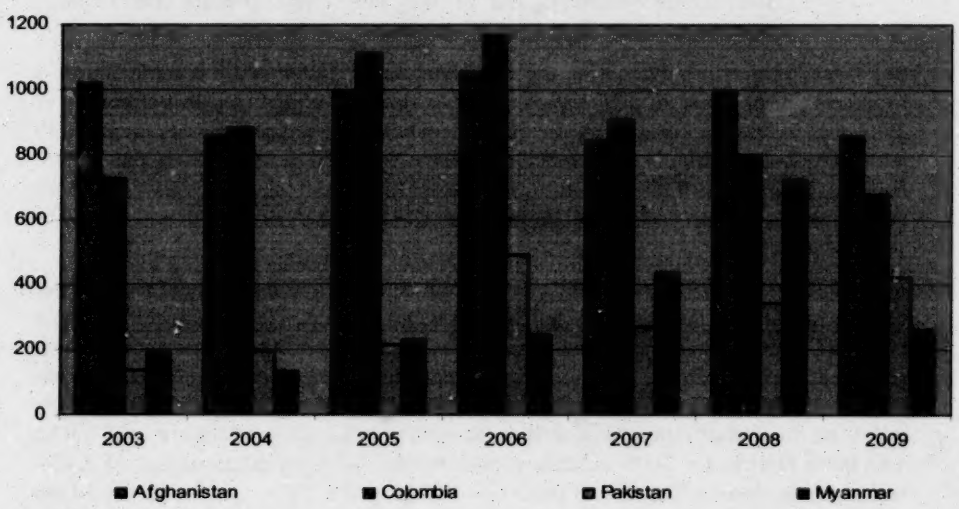
Figure 3: Total casualties per year[a] (2000-2009)



	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
abs no.	8378	8417	8333	8270	6607	6873	6022	5473	5197	3956

[a] Casualties caused by mines, ERW and IEDs.
Source: ICBL, *Landmine Monitor*, 2004-2006; 2008-2010.

Figure 4: Casualties in most-affected countries[a] (2003-2009)



[a] Casualties caused by mines, ERW and IEDs.
Source: ICBL, *Landmine Monitor*, 2004-2010.

71. The analysis of the survey indicates that progress has been made towards reducing death and injury; however, findings do not represent a single global trend on landmine and ERW casualties. The raw figures of death and injury are not fully comparable across years or from one country to another. Overall, the numbers of casualties (including death and injury) were reported to be decreasing in 22 of 30 mine-affected countries that provided complete data. However, eight affected countries and territories reported an increase in casualties.

72. Strategic objective 2 (mitigate the risk to community livelihoods and expand freedom of movement for at least 80 per cent of the most seriously affected communities) is simply impossible to measure. The Inspectors could ascertain during their interviews that there is no clear understanding from mine action stakeholders of what the "80 per cent risk to community livelihoods and expansion of freedom of movement" is. However, the survey revealed that 91 per cent of respondents agree that mine action has facilitated the expansion of freedom of movement and has also enabled socio-economic development.

73. As regards strategic objective 3 (integrate mine action needs into national development and reconstruction plans and budgets in at least 15 countries), the survey indicates that mine action has been integrated into national development and reconstruction plans in at least 25 countries. A total of 28 countries report having established a national mine action authority, all of which have a national mine action strategy. Of these, 20 have also established a national policy on mine action. However, the most important issues regarding strategic objective 3 are: first, its ownership, since, despite being part of the Strategy, the ownership of strategic objective 3 clearly rests with national authorities and in this regard might not be representative enough of the work undertaken by the United Nations; and second, the lack of a qualitative analysis that could help to determine if the national plans and capacities established are appropriate and effective in addressing mine action local needs.

74. Regarding strategic objective 4 (assist the development of national institutions to manage the landmine/ERW threat, and at the same time prepare for residual response capacity in at least 15 countries), the Inspectors determined that there is no common understanding of what residual response capacity is. The survey indicates that, of the 25 countries that provided information, 14 indicated that they have all 10 types of residual response capacities included in the survey[20] to a certain degree; the remainder indicated that they have at least 5 of these types. It should be noted that residual response capacity should be tailored to local needs and that not all countries require residual response capacity in all 10 areas. Again, as indicated for strategic objective 3, this objective does not address the effectiveness and qualitative aspects of the reported response capacity in relation to the specific problem faced by each mine-affected country.

75. The survey identified the need for further analysis to assess the degree to which each objective has been achieved. **The conclusion of the survey is largely in accordance with the Inspectors' findings. Progress has been made towards reducing death and injury, facilitating humanitarian assistance and development activities, building national ownership, and integrating mine action into national development and reconstruction plans. Overall, progress has been achieved; the remaining challenge is to measure it. These findings also indicate that mine action efforts remain relevant and require continued and sustained focus, assistance and funding.**

[20] Residual response capacity as defined in the survey includes the following 10 areas: accreditation, coordination, explosive ordnance disposal, mine clearance, mine risk education, procurement, public information media, quality assurance, resource mobilization and survivor assistance.

76. Objectives should be specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound (SMART). However, the strategic objectives included in the Strategy are not SMART enough. In addition, reliable baseline data is not available, and the survey analysis undertaken by a consultant indicates that "progress towards each strategic objective ... is measured differently from country to country". Furthermore, the consultant states in the analysis that "many country offices do not have the appropriate data collection and data management capabilities in place". The Inspectors concur with these statements; several stakeholders, including some mine action national authorities, confirmed that the data that is available is not reliable, or that data is simply very difficult, thus expensive, to obtain and therefore only partially available.

77. The Inspectors would like to highlight the responsibility of UNMAS in this regard. Strategic objectives 1 and 2 include major activities linked to the development of adequate monitoring systems to measure progress (objective 1, activity (d) and objective 2, activity (c)) or to the provision of mine action data to national planning agencies (objective 3, activity (a)). At the end of the strategic cycle 2006-2010, this area was still a work in progress.

78. In this regard, the Inspectors welcome the publicly available database on landmine contamination, casualties and clearance (LC^3D) that was launched in June 2011 by the World Bank's Development Economics Research Group. The online version contains 192 countries and data is provided from two sources: the Landmine Monitor and the United Nations. The data will prove important for comparison among countries and the assessment of development impact, as well as for the identification of trends in contamination, in casualties or in clearance activities. The database is intended to fill a gap in the statistical analysis and supplement the narrative on mine action for better informed policymaking.[21] Furthermore, it constitutes a major step in collecting, compiling and analysing mine action-related information.

79. In the context of the increasing mainstreaming of mine action into development, it is more important than ever to have reliable data on the economic impact of mine action and ERW contamination on development efforts. The need to use information emphasizing the linkages between mine action and achieving the MDGs was specifically recognized by the United Nations in the Strategy review. Although the available data is not yet entirely consistent and there are deficits in terms of its user-friendliness, the World Bank database is a unique initiative that needs support to secure its maintenance in the long term, beyond the two years during which the World Bank is hosting it. **The Inspectors therefore conclude that the IACG-MA should take a decision on how to best support this encouraging initiative with a view to further improving the database and securing its maintenance.**

80. The survey and the inter-agency process that led to its development point to some important gaps and challenges and to some important lessons learned. The main challenges are: (a) there is no global baseline data for mine action, yet such data is urgently needed to measure impact and monitor the implementation of the Strategy, (b) there is an absence of appropriate data collection, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms that would align the Strategy's objectives with the mine action programmes' achievements, and finally, (c) there is a lack of understanding and consensus from mine action stakeholders on how to measure impact and monitor the implementation of the Strategy over time. Again, the Inspectors stress the importance of considering these factors when developing the new strategy for 2011-2015.

[21] World Bank, "Note 1: introduction to the LC^3D", presented at the 12th International Meeting of National Mine Action Directors and United Nations Advisors, 26 March 2009.

81. There have been efforts by IACG-MA members to define output-oriented objectives, but the above review illustrated how difficult it is to measure some of the current strategic objectives. The results of the questionnaire conducted by JIU in May/June 2011 reflect the need expressed by various stakeholders to establish SMART objectives and indicators as part of the new strategy.

82. It can be argued that the results of the internal review commissioned by IACG-MA show a misleading picture concerning the overall contribution of the United Nations, because the impact and results achieved cannot be attributed to the United Nations alone. This again is an area for further improvement: ownership of objectives/activities, which needs to be further clarified in the new strategy.

D. Development of a new strategy

83. The draft outline of the 2011-2015 strategy, presented at the 14th International Meeting of National Mine Action Programme Directors and United Nations Advisors, held on 15 March 2011, highlights some changes compared to the previous Strategy. According to the draft outline, the strategy should be first and foremost a United Nations document for United Nations mine action, contrary to the 2006-2010 Strategy, which is considered a global document for the entire sector. However, the questionnaire undertaken by JIU for the present review reveals that the vast majority (81 per cent) of all respondents, regardless of their affiliation, are of the view that the next strategy should be a reference document for all stakeholders in mine action. The draft strategy is designed to be a pinnacle document in a hierarchy of plans, such as agency-specific mine action guidance or country-level plans. It contains the following major strategic goals:

- Affected member States have appropriate institutions and mechanisms for mine action
- Normative frameworks and advocacy efforts that support mine action are strengthened
- Coordinated and coherent mine action support is provided to the field

84. The consultations and elaboration of the new strategy brought to the forefront some systemic problems. First, there is little consensus within the IACG-MA on how mine action should move ahead, which has created considerable tension among its members. Moreover, even though a clear majority of the respondents to the JIU survey agree that the drafting process should include all concerned stakeholders, some actors, in particular NGOs, do not feel sufficiently consulted. This could eventually undermine the acceptance of the new strategy.

85. The development of the new strategy is not an easy undertaking. It should, inter alia, reflect the leading, coordination, and facilitation roles of the United Nations in mine action and its position in the global context. In summing up, the Inspectors stress that the development of the new strategy should give sufficient attention to the following major points:

- Promoting Delivering as one
- Positioning the United Nations as the global leading actor in mine action
- Emphasizing the importance of establishing a sound monitoring and evaluation process required to evaluate progress in mine action, inter alia through the

establishment of global baseline data, and the development of SMART objectives and concrete indicators with measurable outcomes to assess major activities

- Taking into account the role of donors
- Making reference to the broader, in particular socio-economic, context of mine action in line with existing international norms and standards, including the MDGs
- Engaging national institutions and supporting capacity-building
- Including all stakeholders concerned in the further discussion and drafting process to achieve a broad acceptance of the new strategy
- Informing the development of a new Policy in which roles, responsibilities and the ownership of agencies for different scenarios are further clarified
- Reinforcing compliance with international law

86. The implementation of the following recommendation is expected to enhance the effectiveness of the United Nations mine action activities.

Recommendation 2

In the context of the preparation of the new strategy, the Secretary-General should establish a global baseline of reliable data while building on ongoing efforts, which should facilitate the systematic monitoring of progress and the final evaluation of actual results achieved towards the strategic objectives.

IV. Coordination

A. Coordination within the United Nations and the cluster framework

87. The IACG-MA is the main mechanism supporting inter-agency coordination of mine action initiatives and activities within the United Nations system. Chaired by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations; its composition includes 14 United Nations departments, agencies, programmes and funds that play a role in mine action programmes in over 30 countries and three territories. The IACG-MA is the forum for coordinating United Nations mine action policies and strategies, monitoring the landmine and ERW threat around the world, and reviewing the United Nations mine action response in a given country. It also provides options and recommendations for consideration by senior United Nations officials in given countries. The group meets monthly at the working level and biannually for major policy decisions which are taken by consensus.

88. The results of the review support the view that the general division of roles and responsibilities within the IACG-MA is largely adequate. However, despite a joint United Nations policy, the broad definition of the roles and responsibilities of each IACG-MA member involved allows for different interpretations as to when exactly one agency's mandate ends and another begins. Historically, there appears to be some continuation of inter-agency competition and, in some cases, UNMAS struggles to assert its leadership role within the United Nations family. UNMAS is formally accepted as the focal point for mine action, but in terms of operational relevance, UNDP, UNICEF and UNOPS now have considerable leverage. Cooperation is partly achieved through the various coordination and liaison groups that have been established. However, the effectiveness and efficiency of cooperation and coordination both at headquarters and in the field varies from case to case and is very much country dependant and personality driven.

89. An internal evaluation of UNMAS conducted in 2006 by the DKPO Best Practices Section concluded that the function of UNMAS as focal point for mine action is not sufficiently recognized. The considerable leverage of actors such as UNDP and UNICEF in mine action has an impact on the mandate of UNMAS as the focal-point. The focal-point role of UNMAS has, without a doubt, contributed to the creation of stronger and more coherent inter-agency strategic planning and policy. The 2006 internal UNMAS evaluation indicated that "UNMAS has, however, demonstrated particular weaknesses in its focal point role. These include the pooling and distribution of resources, the avoidance of double coordination costs between itself and contracted intermediaries, and in its inability to ensure national balance among contracted staff and providers of goods".[22] The Inspectors ascertained that some of these issues remain to be solved.

90. As noted by many key stakeholders in mine action, UNMAS has been given somewhat of a challenging mandate. Coordination requires a degree of authority: UNMAS in its role as the lead entity and focal point for United Nations mine action should have some influence, or "coordination authority" over other United Nations entities involved in mine action. However, this is a difficult issue to solve, given that some of these entities have their own governance structures and policies, as well as a stronger field presence. The broader institutional context is a particular challenge for coordination. Thus it seems that it is, at the very least, difficult for this relatively small entity within DPKO to "impose itself". UNMAS is not only tasked to coordinate the 14 United Nations agencies, programmes and

[22] Peacekeeping Best Practices Section/UNMAS, "Post-conflict coordination — the case of the United Nations Mine Action Service: lessons learned" (June 2006), p. 23.

funds involved in mine action, but also to work as the implementer on the ground, mainly in peacekeeping and emergency contexts. Furthermore, UNMAS has been also entrusted with the responsibility of managing the VTF — the major mine action-funding mechanism (discussed in more detail in chapter V). The VTF channels funding from donors to mine action-related programmes. This multiplicity of roles is at the origin of a widespread perception among mine action stakeholders of the existence of an apparent conflict of interest, as stated by key actors during interviews.

91. The presence of UNMAS in non-peacekeeping contexts at times was found to trigger tensions among agencies. A case in point is the recent example of UNMAS entering into Colombia, at the request of the national authorities, to provide technical support to the national mine action programme, directly and not integrated into the country plan context developed by the United Nations Country Team and the Resident Coordinator system. In fact, UNMAS is not part of the United Nations Country Team, and it established a parallel dialogue with national authorities, alienating some United Nations agencies, donors and NGOs, which had a negative impact on the humanitarian and development work done locally by UNDP and UNICEF, leading some agencies to question the role of UNMAS. These problems arose even though a study undertaken by the DPKO Best Practices Section clearly stated in 2006 that the United Nations Mine Action Policy ought to focus on actual competencies on the ground, rather than predetermined mandates.

92. In this context, the Inspectors reiterate the fundamental principles of humanitarian assistance, namely, humanity, neutrality and impartiality (General Assembly resolution 46/182) and that, according to the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) guidelines, "as a matter of principle, the military and civil defence assets of belligerent forces or of units that find themselves actively engaged in combat *shall not* be used to support humanitarian activities".[23] Consequently, the provision of assistance to belligerents is not excluded per se; however, it is imperative that such cooperative and collaborative arrangements with national institutions do not hinder the United Nation's neutrality and impartiality, even though, in the case of Colombia, the work of UNMAS was focused on the development of civilian structures within the Presidential Program for Mine Action.

93. Field missions undertaken confirmed that each country is a very specific case. The history, the nature of the conflict, together with major actors, including the United Nations local presence, are unique in each case. This leads the Inspectors to fully concur with the idea that mine action should focus on actual competencies on the ground. However, headquarters coordination is crucial and has an important impact on specific country activities, as the Inspectors observed during the field visit to Colombia, where the lack of coordination at headquarters level negatively affects the coordination of United Nations entities at the national level.

94. Whereas key stakeholders support the establishment of a "firewall" between the UNMAS role of coordinator and that of implementer, UNMAS itself stresses that the focal point function for mine action is well placed within DPKO, mainly due to the importance of peacekeeping contexts, the centralized organizational structure of DPKO and its direct access to the assessed budget. A comparable conflict of interest existed in some mine-affected countries where mine action coordination, policy development, normative activities, and sometimes even funding coordination and allocation, were the responsibility of a single national body (for example, in Cambodia), which also had programme implementation under its responsibilities. The conflict of interest was resolved by splitting

[23] IASC, "Civil-military relationship in complex emergencies", IASC reference paper, June 2004, para. 38.

the entity into two different organizations, one responsible for, inter-alia, coordination, priority setting, the development of norms and local standards and the maintenance of relevant information systems and national databases, and the other responsible for the implementation of projects. The Inspectors are convinced that the same approach should be used within the United Nations system. In their view, overall mine action coordination should be separated from project management and/or implementation, and decisions regarding implementation, when undertaken or managed by a United Nations entity, should be determined by actual competencies on the ground.

95. **The inspectors agree with some donor member States interviewed that, within certain contexts (e.g. peacekeeping or emergency responses), UNMAS may have the comparative advantage to exercise an effective key operational function when there are no alternative actors. However, limiting UNMAS to a mere coordination role may be counterproductive and may have a negative impact on the effectiveness of United Nations mine action on the ground. Hence, an operational role in such cases must be carefully thought through and linked to a hand-over strategy beyond the emergency and/or peacekeeping/political mandates.**

96. The implementation of the following recommendation is expected to enhance coordination and cooperation within the United Nations system.

Recommendation 3

The Secretary-General, as Chairman of the CEB and in consultation with the executive heads of relevant United Nations system organizations involved in mine action, should initiate a transparent and inclusive process aimed at clarifying the terms of reference of UNMAS as well as the tasks and mandates of other actors, with a view to positioning UNMAS as the main mine action policy and coordinating entity in addition to its role as a focal point for United Nations mine action, while recognizing its operational role in specific contexts, such as emergency responses, peacekeeping and support to special political missions.

97. The atmosphere of conflict within the United Nations entities in which the new draft strategy has been prepared is another sign of tension, one that is reflected at the field level and is a well-known issue among mine action practitioners. The Inspectors firmly believe that this atmosphere is jeopardizing open cooperation and coordination and goes against the vision of Delivering as one. Furthermore, the 2006-2010 Strategy had already identified the risk of "a lack of willingness on the part of the partners to work together"[24] as a potential major hurdle in its implementation.

98. The High-level Panel on United Nations System-wide Coherence in the areas of development, humanitarian assistance and the environment states in its report published in 2006 that "inefficient and ineffective governance and unpredictable funding have contributed to policy incoherence, duplication and operational ineffectiveness across the system. Cooperation between organizations has been hindered by competition for funding, mission creep and by outdated business practices".[25] In order to address this fragmentation, the High-level Panel recommended the "Delivering as one" approach and a stronger

[24] United Nations Inter-Agency Mine Action Strategy: 2006-2010, para. 13.

[25] A/61/583, p. 10.

commitment to working together on the implementation of one strategy, in the pursuit of one set of goals.[26]

99. In Albania, one of the pilot countries for the Delivering as one initiative, and where one of the field missions was undertaken by the Inspectors, the coherent implementation of this concept, together with a small and efficient country team, has greatly helped to improve coordination and communication among United Nations agencies, thus benefiting also mine action-related activities and contributing to the overall success of mine action in that country.

100. The 2009 report of the Secretary-General on peacebuilding in the immediate aftermath of conflict identified mine action as a priority area,[27] and UNMAS is referred to as a good example of a single entity that acts as a go-to source of knowledge, expertise and capacity and that may host limited rapidly deployable capacities.[28] Nonetheless, the Secretary General's progress report from July 2010 revealed that in mine action, the internal policy had not always provided sufficient coordination authority to ensure rapid, predictable and effective delivery in complex post-conflict environments.[29]

101. In 2004, a review of the international humanitarian system identified major gaps in several areas of humanitarian response, as well as problems of coordination. The absence of clearly mandated lead agencies often resulted in international responses to humanitarian crises that were ad hoc, leading to capacity and response gaps. In 2005, the IASC agreed on the use of the cluster approach when dealing with complex humanitarian emergencies, and that it should be applied at the global and also at the country level with some flexibility. Each cluster is a major sector, such as nutrition, protection or education. In the case of the Global Protection Cluster, this is further broken down into areas of responsibility (AoRs) that operate under the overall leadership of UNHCR as the global lead agency for protection. UNMAS is the lead entity for the mine action AoR. While there has been a mine action AoR since 2005, it had never been operational. Instead, the IACG-MA and the Policy remained the main mechanisms for United Nations mine action coordination. A "cluster lead" is an agency/organization that formally commits to take on a leadership role within the international humanitarian community in a particular sector (area of activity), to ensure adequate response and high standards of predictability, accountability and partnership. A cluster lead takes on the commitment to act as the "provider of last resort" in that particular sector (area of activity). AoR lead agencies hold similar roles within their area of responsibility, while the lead agency maintains overall leadership and accountability, including accountability for the cluster.

102. The Policy Committee issued decision 2010/18/i, tasking the IACG-MA to review the current inter-agency Policy and the associated Framework for Mine Action Planning and Rapid Response, as previously mentioned. At a brainstorming session in October 2010, the IACG-MA decided that, in principle, the Global Protection Cluster was the most appropriate forum of coordination for mine action. In this sense, the decision implicitly amended the Policy, in particular with respect to those humanitarian interventions that fall within the third scenario contemplated in the Policy (emergency response) and where the cluster approach is applicable.

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[26] Ibid.

[27] A/63/881-S/2009/304, para. 17

[28] Ibid., para. 53.

[29] A/64/866-S/2010/386, para. 37.

103. Other scenarios, where the cluster approach is not applicable, will remain under the consideration of the IACG-MA. On 2 March 2011, UNMAS convened an information briefing on the mine action AoR and a review of the draft AoR terms of reference with the participation of relevant mine action actors, including NGOs. The terms of reference were endorsed and approved by those attending the 1 July 2011 meeting on the AoR. The mine action AoR is aimed at supporting cohesive, inter-agency and inter-organization responses at the field level through global level advocacy, standards and policy setting, building response capacity and other support as required.

104. Libya provides the first example of applying the AoR concept at the field level, initiated by UNMAS at headquarters and leading to the establishment of the Joint Mine Action Coordination Team, with relevant field operators providing coordination, prioritization of tasks, mobilization of resources, liaison with authorities and linking to the cluster system at the country level.

B. Coordination with donors

105. Given the difficult economic context and the likely decline of the international financial support specific for mine action, donor coordination is an element critical to making the most efficient use of resources available. The GIHCD study entitled "Mine action funding: trends, modalities and future prospects" includes the results of a survey among donor countries carried out in 2010 and concludes, regarding donor coordination, that:

- Donors are generally in favour of improved coordination, both among themselves and with mine-affected countries.
- They tend to respond to invitations to coordinate, as opposed to being proactive and initiating activities in support of coordination.
- Donor administrations and, in particular, the number of officers responsible for mine action, have been reduced over the years. As a result, donor capacities have been weakened, resulting in a loss of focus, increased dependency on mine action operators, NGOs and the United Nations, and loss of corporate memory and in-house expertise.
- Their participation in coordinating activities in the field depends very much on the type of programming and the approach they take in their relationships vis-à-vis the host country.[30]

106. The United Nations has an important role to play regarding donor coordination, in particular at the global level. As reflected in the Policy, the United Nations provides support to the Mine Action Support Group (MASG), a donor forum including State parties and non-State parties to the APMBC, which generally meets in New York. The MASG, chaired by donor countries on a rotating basis, is a body providing an opportunity for donors and the United Nations to share information on emerging trends, operational priorities, funding gaps and the effective and efficient coordination and implementation of mine action.[31]

[30] See footnote 13, pp. 12-13.

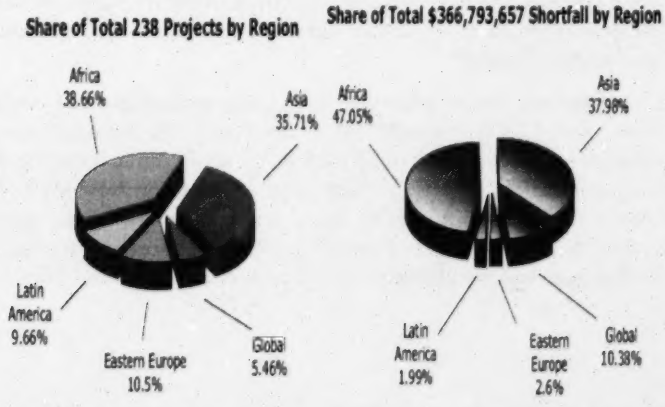
[31] Report of the Secretary-General on assistance in mine action (A/64/287), para. 32.

107. The Inspectors noted that donor coordination has been a serious challenge for effective mine action in the past. Despite some reform initiatives, more efforts will be needed in the coming years to provide for an open dialogue and to improve the collective donor contribution. The functioning of the MASG has been improved, for example, by reducing the number of meetings, originally held on a monthly basis, to two to three meetings per year and thereby allowing the participation of decision-makers from capitals. Nevertheless, the meetings are often attended by officers with no decision-making capacity. Another initiative, which is currently being implemented with funds provided by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, is to fund a strengthened MASG secretariat until the end of March 2013.

108. Serious challenges remain. For example, most of the funding is still provided on a short-term annual basis. Even though the Inspectors are aware that some donors may face challenges in their national legislative frameworks, better results may be achieved if more States parties follow the examples of the donors who are already providing multi-year funding, which is key to facilitate subsequent planning.

109. Several tools have been developed to facilitate donor coordination and to support in-country coordination: the *Portfolio of Mine Action Projects* has been published annually since 1998 and is intended as a comprehensive resource tool and reference document for donors, policymakers, advocates, and national and international mine action implementers. The *Portfolio* is intended ideally to reflect on projects conceived by mine- and ERW-affected countries based on national priorities and strategies. Each project proposal contains a description of objectives, targeted beneficiaries, planned activities, expected outcomes, the name of the appealing agency, a list of implementing partners, the total budget and the expected shortfall for the coming years; the country overviews and project proposals are posted and regularly updated online at www.mineaction.org. The *Portfolio of Mine Action Projects 2011* lists 238 projects for 29 countries, territories or missions affected by landmines and ERW, amounting to over US$ 498 million in combined budgets and for which there was a funding shortfall of US$ 367 million as of March 2011 (see figure 5). The geographical distribution in terms of projects shows that most planned activities are deployed in Africa (92 projects out of 238). In terms of shortfall as well, Africa, in particular Sudan, has seen the largest — more than US$ 172 million.

Figure 5. Share of total projects and shortfall by region, 2011



Source: UNMAS/UNDP/UNICEF, *Portfolio of Mine Action Projects 2011*, p. 379.

110. The *Portfolio* in its current form and format has moved primarily towards one of its initial objectives: it is considered more of a fundraising tool than a mechanism to facilitate in-country coordination and joint planning. However, the Inspectors are convinced that both elements should complement each other and that the full potential of the *Portfolio* still needs to be explored. Furthermore, the Inspectors stress that project proposals must be based on needs assessments, which greatly enhance their relevance, and highlight the importance of engaging representatives from national and local authorities as well as other relevant actors with in-country knowledge in the drafting process. Particular attention should also be paid to countries or territories that may currently not be reflected in the *Portfolio*, but that still need assistance.

111. In this context, representatives from mine-affected countries have repeatedly expressed concerns about information gaps and transparency regarding incoming funding, and have highlighted the need to be better informed in order to facilitate planning at the national level. It is vital, therefore, that funding flows are transparent and that donors make sure that support for mine action funding, in particular through bilateral channels, is in line with national priorities. Some affected countries still do not know where and how to access donor funding, more than 10 years after the APMBC entered into force.

112. In order to address these deficits and to promote information sharing, UNMAS should consider revitalizing the global Database of Mine Action Investments,[32] which was initially developed for that purpose, but has not been maintained. Furthermore, the Inspectors stress that an exploration should be undertaken as to what extent this database — basically a "portfolio of donors" — could either complement the *Portfolio of Mine Action Projects* or even be integrated in this tool. Given the recent decision to publish the *Portfolio* only electronically (for the first time in 2010) on the E-MINE website, it may also be useful to consider creating a regularly updated financial tracking system similar to the model used by OCHA for humanitarian aid flows. A practical and user-friendly information-sharing platform would not only increase transparency regarding both funding availability and existing funding needs, but it would facilitate coordination and allow for the tracking of contributions.

113. Overall, **the Inspectors conclude that donor coordination needs improvement.** Donors also expressed the need to strengthen existing coordination mechanisms, especially the MASG. **Ideally, donors should get together with mine-affected countries and jointly develop strategies.** However, this is the exception rather than the rule. A first encouraging step in this direction was recently taken at the tenth Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction, where it was decided to establish the Standing Committee on Resources, Coordination and Assistance.

C. Coordination with other actors

114. The Steering Committee on Mine Action (SCMA) supports the coordination of United Nations mine action initiatives with non-United Nations partners. In addition to members of the IACG-MA, it includes, inter alia, representatives of ICRC and ICBL, GICHD and international mine action NGOs.

[32] The Database of Mine Action Investments was initially developed with the support of the Government of Canada to provide information on the resources made available worldwide for international mine action assistance. See www.mineaction.org/overview.asp?o=27.

115. For more than a decade, the IACG-MA, in partnership with GICHD, has organized the annual International Meeting of National Mine Action Programme Directors and United Nations Advisors, which is traditionally attended by senior officials from national mine action programmes, United Nations mine action advisors and officials, NGOs, experts from donor governments and other implementing partners. The meeting constitutes an opportunity for participants to meet and assess progress achieved and discuss future challenges for the sector. The Inspectors attended the 2011 meeting and had the opportunity to exchange views with diverse mine action actors from different mine-affected countries, who provided valuable information for the preparation of the present review. The International Meeting of National Mine Action Programme Directors and United Nations Advisors is a positive initiative that promotes relevant knowledge-sharing and open discussions and, in the view of the Inspectors, should be maintained.

116. As previously mentioned, civil society was a major driving force in the establishment of the Ottawa Convention and, as illustrated in previous paragraphs, it is a major actor in current mine action. NGOs are the interested observers of the APMBC and, in most cases, the implementers on the ground. Therefore, communication and coordination between civil society and the United Nations entities concerned is essential. In order to gather their views, the Inspectors held interviews with civil society representatives in every field mission undertaken, and a group meeting was convened with NGO representatives in Geneva. NGO officials interviewed expressed regret that the dialogue between them and the United Nations agencies has deteriorated since the Nairobi Summit in 2004; however, interviews conducted and the results of the JIU survey indicate that the dialogue is being revitalized.

117. In general, NGOs support the view of a "mine-free" world, while some donor countries and other stakeholders promote the concept of "impact-free", which implies concentrating efforts in clearing land based on socio-economic criteria and the impact on affected communities, thus relegating the legal obligation to remove all mines as contained in the APMBC. The Convention requires that each State Party make every effort to identify all mine areas containing anti-personnel mines and to clear and destroy all anti-personnel mines found in areas under its jurisdiction or control. For its part, the United Nations, partly driven by donors, modified its humanitarian approach to mine action by considering it in a broader development context. While both concepts and preferences should be seen as part of a continuum rather than separate and disparate end states, NGOs strongly feel that this disconnect should be resolved and the dialogue renewed in an open and constructive manner.

118. The tools to facilitate the dialogue are in place. The SCMA supports the coordination of United Nations mine action initiatives with non-United Nations partners, providing a forum for open discussion and the sharing of information. The SCMA meets at least once a year, normally in Geneva, and may set up ad hoc groups to tackle particular country-specific or thematic issues. The AoR for mine action within the Global Protection Cluster, if activated, is another forum through which NGOs could provide feedback to the United Nations system.

119. NGO responses to the JIU survey revealed a certain uneasiness when it comes to assessing working relations with the United Nations. At the same time, NGOs acknowledged that a more constructive dialogue has started with the United Nations in recent months, especially on issues such as cooperation, the efficient and effective use of resources, and humanitarian emergencies, including their involvement in the mine action AoR.

120. Coordination at the field level is also affected by work processes, such as procurement and other contractual arrangements. Different partners have different internal working procedures that in most cases are well understood within their respective organizations; however, they might not be understood when cooperating in partnership with other organizations. This is especially important when very different organizations enter partnership agreements. Bureaucracy hinders cooperation. In this context, key implementing NGOs highlighted the burdensome reporting requirements of some United Nations entities; furthermore, different United Nations entities and programmes place different reporting requirements and obligations on implementing partners. **The Inspectors conclude, therefore, that the United Nations system should make an effort to harmonize reporting criteria (for example, through common templates) when working with external partners in humanitarian and developmental projects, including mine action.**

D. The development of national capacity and transition to national ownership

121. As defined in the Policy, United Nations mine action activities are intended to promote national ownership, institution-building and capacity development. Furthermore, the strategic goal of the United Nations Inter-Agency Mine Action Strategy 2006-2010 is to "… work with national authorities … to reduce the humanitarian and socio-economic threats posed by landmines … at which point United Nations mine action assistance will no longer be necessary" (para. 14). This implies that in the longer term, nationally defined mine action goals and objectives can be reached with little or no international support. Strategic objective 4 outlines major activities to assist national authorities and includes general indicators to measure progress. The primary responsibility for mine action always lies with the Government of the mine-affected country. This responsibility should be vested in a national mine action authority that is charged with the regulation, management and coordination of a national mine action programme.

122. The context and circumstances for national capacity development and institution-building to manage the landmine/ERW threat vary significantly and depend greatly on the commitment of the Governments of mine-affected countries. Consequently, mine action authorities within affected countries have unique mandates, often — but not necessarily — laid out in the national legislation, structured to establish and articulate the coordination and management of activities. In a typical mine action programme, the United Nations supports the development of national mine action structures at three levels:

(1) A mine action regulatory and policy institution at the inter-ministerial level;

(2) A coordination body that also supervises the various mine action operations in consultation with key stakeholders;

(3) Operating organizations of non-governmental, commercial, civil defence, police or military nature.

123. Under certain circumstances, in particular peacekeeping and humanitarian emergencies, the United Nations assumes some or all of the responsibilities normally undertaken by a national mine action authority. In such cases, it is UNMAS, in cooperation with other relevant IACG-MA members, that is typically mandated to coordinate the planning for an emergency response, establish a mine action programme, support the deployment of any peacekeeping operation, and eventually transfer programme-

management responsibilities to national authorities. In other circumstances, usually other than immediately post-conflict and facilitated by their established country presences, other IACG-MA members, such as UNDP or UNICEF, may manage and/or support some parts or even the entire national mine action programme at the request of national authorities.

124. The development of national mine action structures and institutions and the coordination among agencies undertaking related activities are among the biggest challenges for United Nations mine action programming. Capacity-building has not received the strategic attention it deserves, and the related support activities appear to be ad hoc, consisting mainly of middle and senior management training, including missions to other mine action programmes, and the provision of offices and purchasing of vehicles. In many cases it does not appear that there is a joint United Nations strategy with a comprehensive and detailed capacity-building plan in place on how the United Nations will work with national authorities over a certain period of time in order to progressively transfer responsibility for mine action. The often quoted case of Chad illustrates this deficit in the transfer of knowledge to local staff and national authorities, as acknowledged by key mine action stakeholders, including senior United Nations officials. National authorities in Chad argued that consultants sent by UNDP to work with the Government were often ill-equipped to improve the Government's management skills. At the same time, it is clear that national capacity can improve only if the national actors assume their role, take responsibility and speak up about the priorities.[33]

125. As pointed out in the review of the progress achieved towards strategic goals, only 56 per cent of mine-affected countries, or 14 out of 25 countries that provided data, have a residual response capacity for all areas of mine action in place. Given that each country represents a very specific context, mine action national capacities and response, including residual response, do not need to cover all areas of mine action but only those relevant to the national context, thus the figures provided are only a reference and do not provide a precise idea of how adequate these capacities are to deal locally with the problem of ERW. Furthermore, there is little information available about the effectiveness and quality of the countries' capacities, which limits the value of the results presented in the progress report.

126. As already indicated, comparing results in national capacity-building and extracting lessons learned from context-specific programmes is difficult. Nevertheless, some countries provide good examples that should be taken into consideration. For instance, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the transition to national ownership and the sustainability of capacities is, at least overall, a success story. Other countries, such as Albania, are very close to assuming full national ownership. According to the chairman and director of the Bosnia and Herzegovina Mine Action Centre, the transfer of responsibilities from the United Nations to the Centre was smooth and successful. UNDP has actively supported the mine action efforts of Bosnia and Herzegovina since 1996. Initially, it managed the mine action centre responsible for coordinating the national programme and for compiling and maintaining the database of minefield records. These responsibilities were transferred to national authorities in 1998, at which point UNDP initiated its multi-donor-financed Integrated Mine Action Programme (IMAP). IMAP has been successful in supporting the emergence of national capacities for planning and coordinating the mine action programme.

[33] For additional information on the case of Chad, see: The Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN-OCHA), "Analysis: the problem of demining in Chad", 18 June 2010, available from www.irinnews.org/PrintReport.aspx?ReportID=89536; and Chad, "Convention sur l'interdiction de l'emploi, du stockage de la production et du transfert des mines antipersonnel et sur leur destruction: demande de prolongation du délai accordé au titre de l'article 5 de la Convention, République du Tchad", 17 August 2010.

Overall, IMAP is an effective instrument to support the development of national capacities, and to facilitate the progressive transition of the country programme from post-conflict reconstruction and resettlement toward sustainable development. [34] Despite some challenges related to management and transparency, Bosnia and Herzegovina reached a relatively high level of national capacities and experience, to the extent that there is considerable potential for other countries to learn from and exchange lessons learned with Bosnia and Herzegovina; Georgia, Sudan and Jordan have already done so.[35]

127. In this context, the Inspectors underline that the full potential of South-South and triangular cooperation still remains to be explored.[36] Initiatives have been undertaken in the framework of the UNDP Mine Action Exchange Programme, which facilitates cooperation and peer review among affected countries and the dissemination of good practices. For example, exchanges of information and experience among the mine action programmes of Angola, Cambodia and Mozambique[37] are encouraging developments in this regard that need to be supported and further enhanced.

128. In Cambodia, the Inspectors also recognize significant efforts undertaken by the national mine action authorities, in cooperation with the country's development partners, to strengthen leadership and ownership of the mine action sector. It is worth noting the recent introduction of Partnership Principles by the Cambodian Mine Action Authority for the implementation of the National Mine Action Strategy. The introduction to the principles commits development partners to follow the Government's leadership in the formulation and implementation of mine action policies and strategies and to align their support with the national plans. The Principles are also intended to enhance aid effectiveness. As a result of increased confidence in the national leadership, the implementation modality of the multi-donor-funded project Clearing for Results was converted from the direct implementation modality of phase I, carried out by UNDP, to the national implementation modality under the ownership and responsibility of the Cambodian Mine Action Authority — Clearing for Results: Phase II.

129. Several countries where national mine action authorities have full ownership over mine action activities are still very dependent on external funding. In fact, some of these national authorities are supported financially by United Nations entities without clear plans for a complete handover of ownership to national Governments, including the financing of their respective mine action national authorities. **The Inspectors conclude therefore that transition strategies should be more precise in this regard, establishing phases and specific deadlines for a complete handover of responsibilities.**

130. Alternatively, in some scenarios the United Nations is requested to manage mine action programmes on behalf of national authorities, such as in the case of Afghanistan. According to UNMAS, in 2002 the United Nations-managed Mine Action Coordination Centre of Afghanistan (MACCA), was entrusted by the Government of Afghanistan to support the mine action coordination of all stakeholders in the country and to assume the obligations under the terms of the APMBC. From 2002 to 2011, the mine action programme received US$ 392.8 million through the VTF, an amount that represents 59 per cent of the overall contributions to the VTF for the same period. These funds were

[34] GICHD, "Mid-term review of the UNDP Integrated Mine Action Programme (IMAP): final report", July 2006, p. iii.

[35] Emina Abrahamsdotter, "Ex-post final evaluation report: Integrated Mine Action Program", 30 April 2010, eleventh page.

[36] See "South-South and triangular cooperation in the United Nations system" (JIU/REP/2011/3).

[37] Report of the Secretary-General on assistance in mine action (A/66/292), para. 34.

primarily used for mine risk education and mine clearance activities. Between 2001 and 2011 the number of people killed or injured by mines and ERW in Afghanistan decreased considerably.[38] In addition, MACCA has worked with the Afghan Department of Mine Clearance to ensure that there is a clear understanding of all stakeholders, their respective mandates, their area of technical expertise, as well as the guidelines they follow when deciding on how and to what extent they should be involved to ensure an effective response and to avoid duplication of efforts.[39]

131. The technical support provided by the United Nations is a key element for the success of national capacity-building activities. In this regard, several stakeholders interviewed repeatedly expressed concerns about the added value of work done by some technical advisers deployed by the United Nations, referring to their level of competence. However, this varies greatly from country to country; therefore, the Inspectors conclude that a general assessment disregarding the context is impossible. Despite good context-specific case studies, **the Inspectors believe that there should not only be clearer job descriptions and performance indicators for United Nations staff involved in mine action in general, but also a common induction/training for project managers and chief technical advisors in particular.**

132. A challenge closely linked to providing adequate technical support for a sustainable national capacity concerns the potential dilution of mine action expertise through its integration into wider programming, for example, in the case of UNICEF into child protection or in the case of UNDP into the broader area of small arms and light weapons. Even though the Inspectors recognize the importance of an integrated approach to mine action. They stress that specific mine action expertise at headquarters level is in danger of steadily being diluted while being integrated into broader clusters such as small arms and light weapons or child protection.

133. **In conclusion, the Inspectors highlight that strengthening the competence of United Nations programme managers and technical advisors through a common training module for mine action induction should focus on how the United Nations, system-wide, conducts mine action activities**, with special emphasis on the concept of Delivering as one, including the roles and responsibilities of United Nations and non-United Nations actors and the different contexts they operate. Other elements could be added to the training programme to guarantee that each United Nations staff member working on mine action has a common basic understanding of United Nations mine action, regardless of the United Nations entity to which he or she belongs.

134. **The Inspectors conclude that this induction should be completed by all new staff expected to work in mine action-related activities, including those at UNMAS, UNICEF, UNDP, UNOPS, and any of the other entities working on mine action-related activities**. The training module could be mandatory for those working in mine action-related activities and should be developed taking into consideration current technologies, such that it is available through the Internet and can be completed from anywhere at any time; resources for its development could come from unearmarked VTF funds. In addition, clear job descriptions and performance indicators need to be established

[38] Data as of February 2012: in 2001, 2,027 people were killed or injured by mines and ERW. By 2011, this figure had dropped to 391.

[39] As of January 2012, mine action activities (clearance, survey, mine risk education, and victim assistance) are conducted by 44 different stakeholders, employing over 12,700 people, who work in 91 districts in 25 provinces (source: UNMAS).

for United Nations staff in the field. As the focal point, UNMAS has the main responsibility in this context.

135. The implementation of the following recommendation is expected to enhance the effectiveness of United Nations mine action activities.

Recommendation 4

UNMAS, in its role as the focal point for mine action, should develop relevant training materials to strengthen the staff capacity, in particular for the common induction of new staff joining any of the United Nations funds, programmes and/or specialized agencies involved in activities related to mine action, paying particular attention to the important role played by non-United Nations entities.

E. Monitoring and evaluation of mine action

136. Monitoring and evaluation is an integral part of the United Nation Inter-Agency Policy framework for mine action. The Policy outlines that the United Nations, overall, should regularly commission external evaluations of its mine action programmes and participate in, or encourage, evaluations of mine action programmes involving all stakeholders at the national or regional levels. Lessons learned from evaluations should inform future planning and programming.[40] The Policy also specifically tasks UNMAS to commission external evaluations of its field programmes, requests UNDP to regularly conduct both internal and external evaluations of its mine action activities, with results and lessons learned made available to all partners and other interested parties, and asks UNICEF to undertake periodic evaluations with a view to develop, disseminate and promote practices, standards, policies and guidelines in the field of MRE. Similarly, implementation activities undertaken by UNOPS are to be continuously monitored, evaluated and assessed to ensure that the right products are delivered in a timely fashion.[41]

137. UNMAS seeks to translate these guiding principles into practice through a variety of means, depending on the context and specificities of different programmes. It works with the field missions on the formulation of programme evaluations for the mine action component of those programmes receiving assessed contributions for peacekeeping operations; these programmes may also be subject to internal audits and evaluations by the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) as well as internal evaluations by the DPKO Division for Policy, Evaluation and Training. For programmes receiving funding from the VTF or other sources, the evaluation requirements are determined internally, at the request of the donors to the programme or by donors directly. UNMAS strives to undertake two external programme evaluations a year, but in practice this has rarely been the case. At the time of writing the present report, UNMAS was not able to provide information on the number and type of evaluations conducted in the past years, so it is difficult to assess its role in this regard. However, **the Inspectors noted that there is no formal evaluation strategy in place that translates the guiding evaluation principles included in the Policy into practice, nor is there a systematic dissemination of lessons learned.**

[40] Mine Action and Effective Coordination (footnote 9 above), para. 27.

[41] Ibid., para. 86 (UNMAS); para. 106 (UNDP); para. 119 (UNICEF); and paras. 135 and 136 (UNOPS).

138. In 2008, UNMAS developed the Recommendations Tracking Tool with the goal to track all recommendations, ranging from those issued in the context of OIOS audits and technical assessments to those formulated in external evaluations. While the Inspectors are generally supportive of the Recommendations Tracking Tool and stress the potential value added by this initiative in capturing recommendations and monitoring them through implementation, they note that implementation and follow-up need improvement, a situation UNMAS attributes to the frequent turnover of staff tasked with its administration. The Inspectors hope that the recent decision to move responsibility for the tool from the Programme Section, as originally envisioned, to the Policy Section, will help to ensure a better follow-up.

139. **To sum up, the Inspectors regret that despite an increasing emphasis on monitoring and evaluation, a culture of monitoring and evaluation has not yet been sufficiently promoted.** The Inspectors underline the importance of monitoring and evaluation, conducted both internally and externally. If monitoring and evaluation of the impact and effectiveness of mine action programmes are seldom undertaken, this seriously weakens long-term impact and project effectiveness in all pillars. The Inspectors conclude therefore that UNMAS and all IACG-MA members need to value increasingly the importance of evaluation and ongoing monitoring in their supported programmes, and should strive to promote a culture of monitoring and evaluation. Particular emphasis should be given to the development of an evaluation strategy and of appropriate monitoring mechanisms.

140. The implementation of the following recommendation is expected to enhance the effectiveness of United Nations mine action activities.

Recommendation 5:

UNMAS, in consultation with the IACG-MA, should develop an evaluation strategy establishing the framework for all types of evaluations, internal or external, including criteria for the systematic evaluation of the Strategy as well as of field activities when relevant.

V. United Nations funding for mine action

A. United Nations funding mechanisms for mine action

141. There are several funding mechanisms in place within the United Nations to channel funds for mine action; each of the main actors, namely, UNMAS, UNDP and UNICEF, has established or manages specific funds.

142. UNMAS-managed programmes in the field and UNMAS headquarters coordination activities are funded by: appropriations by the General Assembly for the mine action component of seven peacekeeping missions;[42] funds allocated to UNMAS headquarters coordination activities within the United Nations peacekeeping support account; contributions of donor governments, organizations and private individuals to the VTF; and the allocation of funds from other United Nations trust funds and multi-donor trust funds (MDTFs), such as the Common Humanitarian Fund for Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo Pooled Fund, and the Nepal Peace Trust Fund. Between 2009 and 2010, voluntary contributions represented 53 per cent of all funding sources of United Nations mine action programmes and peacekeeping appropriations represented 46 per cent. In 2010, General Assembly appropriations for the mine action component represented 55 per cent of the total, the peacekeeping support account represented only 1 per cent and the remaining 44 per cent were voluntary contributions channelled through the VTF.[43] It is important to note that as a consequence of the increase of peacekeeping appropriations and the decrease in voluntary contributions, the ratio of sources of funding for UNMAS-managed programmes has changed, and now peacekeeping appropriations are higher than the VTF-funded portion of mine action programmes.

143. Other mechanisms that support mine action activities include the Thematic Trust Fund for Crisis Prevention and Recovery, established by UNDP in 2000 and managed by the Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery, which has funded UNDP mine action efforts in the amount of US$ 110 million since 2004. In addition, funds are committed directly by UNDP country offices to specific mine action activities. UNICEF funds for mine action programming are mainly managed directly by the relevant UNICEF country offices as well as the Child Protection Section in New York and the Public Sector Alliances and Resource Mobilization Office.

B. The management of the Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Action

144. The VTF was established in 1994 and has been administered by UNMAS since 1998; it is a central fund for United Nations and non-United Nations system-wide assistance to mine action activities. The VTF is a major instrument for channelling mine action funding, having received US$ 680 million since its establishment. According to the established United Nations policies, which govern the management

[42] United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad, United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara, United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, African Union Mission in Somalia and United Nations Mission in Sudan.

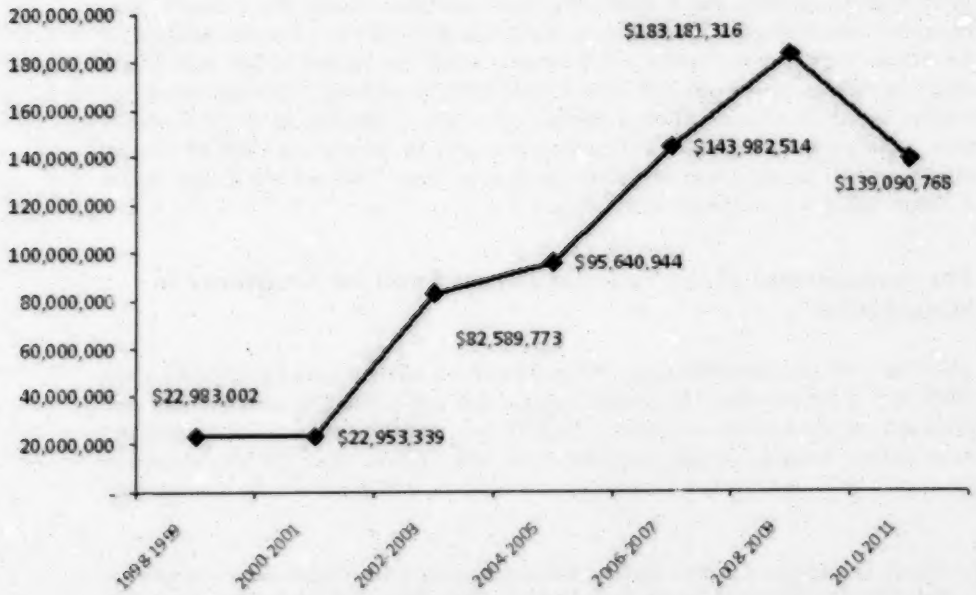
[43] UNMAS, "Who pays for it?", www.mineaction.org/section.asp?s=who_pays_for_it (9 June 2011).

of trust funds, UNMAS, under the authority of the Controller, retains authority over funds received in the VTF in its capacity as the VTF manager, and should perform programme oversight and monitoring functions in line with accountability expectations of the VTF donors.

145. Among the voluntary contributions, the VTF is by far the largest source of funding for mine action. In 2009, its contributions amounted to more than US$ 90 million, whereas for 2010 contributions decreased to a total of US$ 63.5 million. In 2010, of the total amount of funds available to the VTF, only US$ 1.9 million, or 3 per cent of funds, were unearmarked contributions. Figure 6 shows the total amount of voluntary contributions received over the period 1998/1999 to 2010/2011. Contributions to the VTF consistently grew, reaching a peak during the 2008/09 biennium, with donations of more than US$ 180 million.[44]

146. However, in 2010 and 2011, the VTF was not replenished at an adequate level and, as a result of funding constraints, UNMAS had to re-prioritize its programmes and introduce significant budgetary reductions. Contributions made to the VTF during the last biennia reached a peak in the 2008-2009 biennium and then declined (see figure 6); it is probable that previously achieved levels will not be reached and that the decline in VTF funding anticipates a global trend towards gradually reduced funding specific for mine action, as discussed in previous paragraphs.

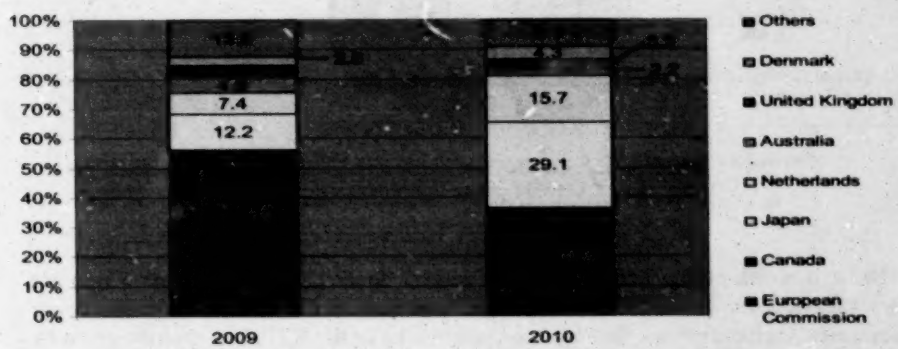
Figure 6. Contributions to the Voluntary Trust Fund, 1998/99-2010/11 in US Dollars



[44] Ibid.

147. UNMAS, through the VTF, receives extrabudgetary support from 10 major donors, who contributed 96.4 per cent of the total amount received in 2010, with heavy dependence on four top donors: the European Commission, Canada, Japan and the Netherlands, which combined contributed 82.8 per cent of the total amount received in 2010. Figure 7 provides a breakdown of major donors to the VTF for 2009 and 2010.

Figure 7: Major Voluntary Trust Fund donors, 2009-2010 (percentage)



148. Taking into account the dependence of UNMAS on a very limited number of donors, and the current global economic context, the Inspectors consider that UNMAS is at risk and would like to stress the need for cautious estimates when planning for the next strategic period. In order to address the potential widening gap between required funding and effective contributions, UNMAS developed the Resource Mobilization Strategy 2010-2013, which has recently been adopted.

149. Figures 8 and 9 provide an overview of the main recipients of contributions to the VTF in 2010 and 2011. More than half of all contributions were earmarked for Afghanistan, in both years. Unearmarked funds represent only about 3 per cent for each year.

Figure 8. Recipients of the VTF contributions 2010 (percentage)

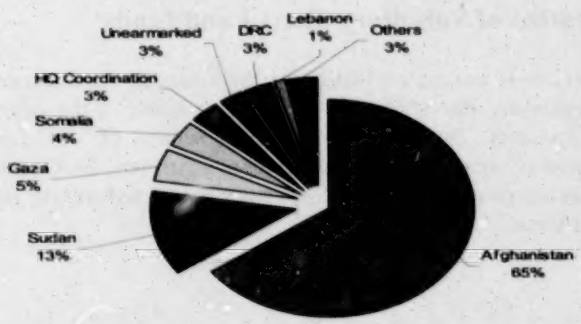
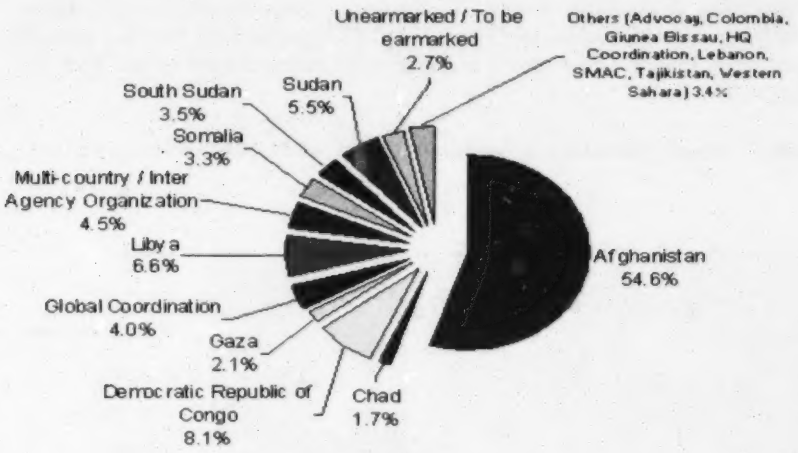


Figure 9. Recipients of the VTF contributions 2011 (percentage)


Unearmarked / To be earmarked 2.7%
Others (Advocay, Colombia, Giunea Bissau, HQ Coordination, Lebanon, SMAC, Tajikistan, Western Sahara) 3.4%
South Sudan 3.5%
Sudan 5.5%
Somalia 3.3%
Multi-country / Inter Agency Organization 4.5%
Liby a 6.6%
Afghanistan 54.6%
Global Coordination 4.0%
Gaza 2.1%
Democratic Republic of Congo 8.1%
Chad 1.7%

150. It is worth noting that some of the largest donor countries in mine action are not contributors to the VTF. The Inspectors held interviews with major donor countries, including some that are not contributors to the VTF. The reasons given by the latter for not using the VTF as one of their major funding channels are diverse, ranging from a donor's specific national cooperation policies to concerns about the efficiency and effectiveness of the VTF as a funding mechanism; in their view, the VTF is expensive, slow and not flexible enough, issues that are discussed in subsequent paragraphs. Furthermore, these views are shared by some mine action practitioners: "The VTF has proved an inefficient mechanism for channelling money to programmes and is disliked by donors because of the high overheads retained by the UN Administration and its slow disbursement of funds to field operations. Increased use of bilateral and other funding mechanisms have sought to bypass such bureaucratic bottlenecks but have also posed problems for the UN's mine action coordination role."[45] Critical voices consider that the survival of the VTF is not a result of the Fund's good performance and efficiency, but more a consequence of the lack of capacity of some donors to follow up on their contributions.

C. Timely disbursement of Voluntary Trust Fund funds

151. The present review is not an evaluation of the financial management of the VTF; specific examples are provided only to illustrate some of the major issues identified by the Inspectors. The delays in the disbursement of VTF funds have repeatedly been a cause of concern among implementing partners, NGOs and donors, as well as mine-affected countries, as the Inspectors confirmed during interviews held with relevant officials.

[45] Alan Bryden, "Optimising mine action policies and practice", in *Security Governance in Post-Conflict Peacebuilding*, Alan Bryden, Heiner Haenggi, eds. (Geneva, Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, 2005), p. 165.

152. OIOS undertook audits of the VTF in 1998, 2004 and 2008,[46] addressing the effectiveness and efficiency of the financial management of the Fund. Following relevant recommendations, UNMAS undertook several important measures to improve the financial management of the VTF. These measures have resulted in improvements in the Fund's financial performance and the UNMAS management of fund assets. Notwithstanding these improvements, OIOS, inter-alia, noted a number of control weaknesses in the financial management of the Fund, including a lack of compliance with financial reporting requirements by implementing partners, delayed disbursement of funds resulting in delayed project implementation, missing deadlines for the efficient return of unspent balances and accrued interest, and lack of reporting of financial results to donors. One major finding addresses the disbursement timeline from the time of receipt to actual disbursement to projects. OIOS found that the average time taken to disburse the contributions was seven months, taking into consideration all approved projects between 2004 and 2006.

153. OIOS also reiterated a recommendation contained in a previous report, in which it requested UNMAS to obtain from the Controller trust fund management and certifying authority for the management of the VTF. In its report AP2009/600/4, dated 29 October 2009, OIOS reiterated, for a second time, its recommendation and stressed that the Department of Management had still not granted the delegation of authority for financial management to streamline processing of instalment payments. The absence of such an authority often resulted in delays in project execution. Finally, in July 2010, officers in the UNMAS Budget, Financial Management and Reporting Unit were delegated certifying authority by the United Nations Controller. This enables UNMAS to authorize payments within the terms of the Financial Agreement, as approved and signed by the Controller. This resulted in a reduction of steps in the allocation and disbursement processes, which the Inspectors see as an encouraging sign.

154. The Inspectors ascertained during the interviews conducted that the timely disbursement of funds remains an issue. There is evidence of delays in various countries, such as in Pakistan (a UNICEF mine-risk education project) and in Chad — the most prominent case in recent years.[47] In both cases the transfers to United Nations partners were significantly delayed due to mostly administrative reasons. At the Eighth Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction Chad requested an extension of 14 months with regard to its article 5 obligations in order to get a clear picture of contamination and to provide the base for further clearance.[48] In March 2009, Japan had signed an earmarked contribution to the VTF of almost US$ 5.6 million to the VTF for a technical survey in Chad to be channelled to UNDP; after lengthy discussions on administrative issues and programme support costs to be charged, funds were finally transferred to UNDP in February 2010, when it was acknowledged that the extended deadline could not be met, inter alia, due to the administrative difficulties already mentioned. This delayed the availability of resources necessary to conduct the technical survey, an essential element for understanding the dimension of ERW contamination.[49]

[46] OIOS Audit Nos. AP97/124/6; AP2003/600/01; and AN2007/600/1.
[47] IRIN-OCHA, "Analysis: the problems of demining in Chad" (footnote 30 above).
[48] Chad, "Demande de prolongation du délai prescrit a l'article 5", 25 July 2008, pp. 6-7.
[49] Chad, "Demande de prolongation" (footnote 33 above), p. 5.

155. The need for improvements become even more apparent when considering the terms of reference of the VTF, which emphasize the role of the Trust Fund as a tool to ensure that "assistance in mine clearance must be delivered in a timely and coordinated manner", indicating also that "the Trust Fund is consequently designed to have a balance of funds ... that can be quickly utilized for mine action activities."[50] **The presentation given by UNMAS on the management of the VTF at the meeting of the Standing Committee on Resources, Cooperation and Assistance in June 2011 is a first encouraging sign towards enhanced transparency in this regard.**

156. UNMAS, on behalf of the IACG-MA, stated at the tenth Meeting of States Parties in December 2010 that it acknowledged concerns raised regarding delays in the provision of funding through the United Nations system, and assured that the United Nations is taking these concerns seriously and currently addressing, as matter of urgency, ways and means to ensure a prompt and effective transfer of funds to the relevant parties.

157. To ensure efficient and cost-effective funding for mine action, and following Policy Committee Decision 2010/18/iii of July 2010, the United Nations Office of the Controller was tasked to facilitate and assist the process in coordination with relevant officers from other United Nations entities, adopting procedures and templates to rapidly disburse funds from the VTF through standardized agreements. The measure requested by the Policy Committee should have been implemented. However, there are still issues which continue to impede a final agreement.

158. **The Inspectors highlight the importance of the timely disbursement of mine action funds** through the VTF. Despite the fact that it is a well-known issue, they reiterate **the need to streamline processes and minimize bureaucracy. A plan of action should be established for the implementation of decision 2010/18/iii to review the disbursement mechanism, establishing a revised deadline for its conclusion and including target indicators for its expected performance; progress achieved towards the efficient and timely disbursement of funds should be monitored in a systematic manner.**

D. The use of unearmarked funds

159. VTF funds can be divided into earmarked and unearmarked contributions. While the former apply to those funds that are granted by donors for specific countries, programmes or United Nations agencies, the latter comprise contributions not tied to specific conditions, as well as interest income generated by the United Nations as a result of investment activities that donors do not require to be paid back. Of the US$ 63.5 million received by the VTF in 2010, no less than US$ 61.6 million, or 97 per cent, was earmarked, whereas only the remaining 3 per cent, or US$ 1.9 million, was contributed without any particular purpose. The VTF terms of reference, dating from 1994, define that "the Trust Fund will achieve its primary goals only with an adequate balance of unearmarked contributions".[51] However, the low level of unearmarked contributions negatively affects the capacity of UNMAS to plan strategically in the medium and long term. In addition, discontinuous

[50] Terms of reference of the Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Clearance, 1994, pp. 1-2; see also A/49/375, p. 23.

[51] Terms of reference of the Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Clearance, p. 4, para. 18.

support by key contributors is another aspect that has considerable impact on strategic planning. In a previous JIU report, the importance of predictability of voluntary funding was acknowledged, and it was noted with concern that earmarking can lead to the distortion of programme priorities.[52] At the same time, donors themselves recognized in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness: Ownership, Harmonisation, Alignment, Results and Mutual Accountability that concrete measures should be taken to address the "failure to provide more predictable and multi-year commitments on aid flows" (para. 4).

160. Whereas the lack of long-term funding commitment and the small percentage of unearmarked funds received are external factors, the use of unearmarked VTF contributions is an issue inherent to IACG-MA coordination. The use of such funds is not clearly addressed in the terms of reference of the VTF. It should be noted that some unearmarked funds, which should benefit the entire IACG-MA, are used to fund UNMAS headquarters coordination activities. However, several stakeholders interviewed complained about the lack of transparency and, in their views, the self-benefiting use made by UNMAS of unearmarked funds.

161. In fact, there are two categories of unearmarked funds: unearmarked contributions as per donor agreement and pooled unearmarked. For reference purposes, it should be noted that for the period 2006-2010 it is estimated that only 3 per cent of unearmarked contributions as per donor agreement went to NGOs, while 39 per cent went to UNOPS for the implementation of UNMAS programmes and 58 per cent went to UNMAS headquarters activities. Pooled earmarked funds were allocated as follows for the period 2007-2010: 25 per cent went to NGOs or mine action national authorities and 5 per cent to UNDP, while 42 per cent went to UNOPS for the implementation of UNMAS programmes and 28 per cent to UNMAS headquarters activities.

162. The lack of a VTF governing mechanism inclusive of all relevant stakeholders is at the origin of the issue. Officials from key IACG-MA members with whom the Inspectors met during the present review highlighted these deficits as a priority issue that should be addressed urgently. It should be mentioned that the Policy Committee of the Secretary-General recommended in July 2010 that an enhanced governance mechanism for the VTF be developed and implemented to guide the most appropriate distribution of unearmarked funds (decision 2010/18/iii). Consequently, the IACG-MA established a working group to take charge of formulating recommendations for the proper allocation of those funds. In response to the Policy Committee's recommendation, the IACG-MA jointly recognized that the use of unearmarked VTF funds requires more transparency, with a view to ensure that agencies are able to access those funds for immediate response. In October 2010, UNMAS submitted a discussion paper to the IACG-MA and provided examples of governance mechanisms for funds, both within and outside the United Nations system. However, since then, no further action has been taken and compliance with the Policy Committee decision was still pending as of July 2011.

163. **The Inspectors conclude that there is a perception that there is an apparent conflict of interest regarding the double role of UNMAS as, on one hand, the VTF fund administrator, and on the other, as a direct beneficiary. They stress the importance of implementing Policy Committee decision**

[52] See "Voluntary contributions in United Nations system organizations: impact on programme delivery and resource mobilization strategies" (JIU/REP/2007/1).

2010/18/iii, and urge the IACG-MA to take immediate action, to implement it in close coordination with the Controller's Office by adopting procedures to more rapidly disburse funds from the VTF, and to develop an enhanced governance mechanism for the VTF. In the Inspectors' view, an improved VTF may well present an attractive platform for donors in the future, and this is an opportunity for the United Nations system to address the criticism raised by some key stakeholders, while building on the value-added the Fund has to offer.

E. Programme support costs

164. The total amount of overhead or programme support costs (PSCs) for channelling funds through the VTF is a major concern for stakeholders, especially donors. The rate of recovery only for the administration of the VTF has been set at 3 per cent since the 2006-2007 biennium. It should be noted that only indirect costs are recovered through this fee. Direct costs, which can be clearly attributed to operations (for example staff and other personnel costs, travel, contractual services, operational expenses, procurement) are not covered by the 3 per cent fee, but recovered as identifiable components of operations, programmes and projects financed from the VTF.

165. Depending on the type of project and its implementation modality, additional overheads can build up as they are charged by each entity participating in the management and implementation chain. For example, UNDP or UNICEF consistently recover 7 per cent as indirect costs, while UNOPS, as implementing partner, recovers 4 or 5 per cent (also called an administrative or management fee). According to UNMAS, charges by NGOs for grants provided by UNMAS are in the range of 5 to 10 per cent, not to exceed the combined programme support costs of 13 per cent established by the General Assembly. Direct costs can result in additional implementation costs (e.g. 2.85 per cent in the case of UNOPS), but these are usually directly charged to the project budget as indicated above.

166. A detailed analysis of PSCs is outside of the scope of this review, however there is a perception that the overall PSC costs are unnecessarily high. Data was requested to further assess the build-up of PSCs in the implementation chain at the time of writing the present report; however, the necessary data has only partially been received. **The Inspectors conclude that in the light of enhanced transparency and within the context of the actions recommended in subsequent paragraphs, the PSC chain and actual overheads should be subject to further analysis and clarification by UNMAS and the IACG-MA.**

167. It should be noted that in the MTDF framework, "there is an ongoing discussion among the participating organizations as to whether the 1 per cent management fee for the AA's [administrative agent's] services is adequate or excessive".[53] Thus there is scope for reconsidering and clarifying the PSC rates for the VTF; however, it should be noted that the UNMAS role is not equivalent to that of the AA.

[53] "Policies and procedures for the administration of trust funds in the United Nations system organizations" (JIU/REP/2010/7), para. 111.

F. Towards an enhanced financial mechanism for assistance in mine action: the revision of the terms of reference of the Voluntary Trust Fund

168. The recommendations and measures contained in previous paragraphs, such as strengthening its responsiveness in disbursing funds, are aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of the VTF in the short term. However, the issues addressed are related to several key elements of the VTF, such as: a responsive mechanism for the effective disbursement of funds; the need to enhance transparency by establishing a governing mechanism inclusive of all relevant stakeholders; and the need to make the VTF more efficient by reviewing PSC rates. These important issues point to a major revision of the terms of reference of the VTF. As adopted in 1994, they no longer reflect the reality on the ground and have not yet taken into account institutional changes or United Nations reform efforts in this area.

169. As highlighted in the 2010 JIU report on the administration of trust funds, the administration and management of trust funds, which are project-based, generally take place within the organization's usual implementation procedures. On the contrary, thematic trust funds and those with bigger volumes "usually have a specifically established governance structure, including a steering or advisory committee or board of trustees".[54] Not only is the VTF a thematic trust fund, but it is one of the largest and most active general trust funds financing humanitarian programmes. However, whereas the VTF is not governed by a specific decision-making body, MDTFs do necessarily comprise a steering committee or similar entity. Even though MDTFs are established in another framework and thus a comparison may seem difficult, some elements could be taken into consideration to enhance the accountability, responsiveness and transparency of the VTF. For instance, an MDTF steering committee may have the key responsibility to review and allocate unearmarked funds, to review and approve proposals from agencies for funding and ensure their conformity with the requirement of the Fund's agreements, or to ensure appropriate consultative planning in order to avoid duplication or overlap between the MDTF and other funding mechanisms. A governance mechanism similar to the steering committees for the MDTFs is lacking in the VTF structure.

170. The Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), despite its focus on short-term emergencies, can be used as an example of the involvement of different stakeholders in its management. It was established by the United Nations to enable more timely and reliable humanitarian assistance to those affected by natural disasters and armed conflicts. Established by the General Assembly through resolution 60/124 of 15 December 2005, the CERF Advisory Group provides the Secretary-General with periodic policy guidance and expert advice on the use and impact of the Fund through the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and the Emergency Relief Coordinator. Members of the Advisory Group serve in their individual capacity, and not as representatives of their countries or Governments. They include government officials from contributing and recipient countries, representatives of humanitarian NGOs, and academic experts. They have been carefully selected to reflect a geographical and gender balance. **The Inspectors believe that this same approach could be applied to the management of the VTF.**

[54] Ibid., para. 50.

171. In this context, important lessons can be learned from the MDTF setting. For 31 of the 32 MDTFs, the MDTF Office of UNDP functions as the AA within the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) framework. Although part of UNDP, the MDTF Office is self-financed and is strictly separated from the UNDP business operations, in line with the Protocol on the Administrative Agent for Multi Donor Trust Funds and Joint Programmes, and One UN Funds, which stipulates that "where the AA is also a Participating UN Organization, a clear delineation, including distinct reporting lines and an accountability framework, will be established and maintained within the organization designated as the AA between its functions as an AA and its functions as a Participating UN Organization" (para. 6). The experience with MDTFs shows that this institutional arrangement works and is relatively well accepted.

172. **The Inspectors acknowledge the recent progress made and encourage further efforts in increasing the efficiency and transparency of the VTF. They also conclude that the terms of reference of the VTF of 1994 should be revised. To support the process and with a view to make clear recommendations for revision of the VTF, a working group should be established with the participation of representatives of large trust funds managed by the United Nations Secretariat, members of the IACG-MA, and UNMAS. The working group should take into account the views of member States, in particular of mine-affected countries and donor countries, and should be guided by recent lessons learned from the experience with MDTFs such as the Peacebuilding Fund.** In particular, the working group should take into account the following key elements:

- The need for an improved governance mechanism inclusive of relevant stakeholders should be established.
- A determination on whether the administration of the VTF should be conferred to an independent entity not involved in project management and/or implementation, so as to be in line with the UNDG principles on the independence of administrative agents, or alternatively a mechanism to minimize the perceived conflict of interest.
- A clarification of the fees charged for the administration of the VTF with a view to increasing both transparency and efficiency.

173. The implementation of the following recommendation is expected to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the VTF management.

Recommendation 6

The Secretary-General should revise the terms of reference of the Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Action, taking into account recent United Nations trust-fund reform efforts, relevant institutional changes and lessons learned from the experience with multi-donor trust funds, with a view to ensuring a more inclusive, transparent and independent governance of the Fund as well as to making its management more efficient and effective.

174. The Inspectors would like to highlight the importance of implementing the above recommendations and, in this regard, they would like to stress the request

made by the General Assembly, in its resolution 66/69, for the Secretary-General to report, inter alia, on this evaluation at the sixty-eighth session.

175. The implementation of the following recommendation is expected to enhance accountability of United Nations mine action.

Recommendation 7

The General Assembly should request the Secretary-General to report on the implementation of the recommendations contained in the present report at its sixty-eighth session.

Annexes

Annex I*

Sudan

A case study on United Nations mine action

Cooperation in the field

Introduction

Sudan, as defined by its pre-11 July 2011 borders, provides an interesting case study in the work of the United Nations (UN) as a whole but this short paper focuses only on its work in mine action.

What is often referred to as the 'Second Civil War'[55] started in 1983 and ended with the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) on 9 January 2005. This also set out the timetable for referendum on independence in South Sudan. The referendum took place between 9 and 15 January 2011 with 98.83% of the population in the south voting for independence and independence itself was celebrated on 11 July 2011. In the words of a senior UN official: "*This is a once in a lifetime chance to build a country from almost nothing*"; *and* "*It is a unique opportunity for national and international communities to work together. Without comprehensive co-operation, the risk of failure is greater and success will take longer.*"

This very brief synopsis masks a multitude of events, situations, experiences and lessons-learned for both the international community and the UN and it is the same for mine action. Indeed, mine action has been a constant activity in Sudan for many years but this paper starts with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and the events leading up to it. Even as far back as 2002, there was a common view between the Government of Sudan (GoS) and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) that the need to allow mine action to take place was outside politics.

The role of mine action

A legal dimension

The General Assembly adopted a Resolution on emergency assistance to the Sudan[56] in which (Section 14) the GoS is reminded of its obligations under the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Treaty (MBT) "... *and urges the international community and the United Nations agencies to provide appropriate assistance related to mine action in the Sudan.*" During the Fourth Meeting of States Parties to MBT[57] (16-20 September 2002), a meeting took place between representatives of the GoS, SPLM, and the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS). The meeting focussed on appropriate ways for the UN to provide

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* Reproduced as received.

[55] The 'First Civil War' was between 1955 and 1972.

[56] Resolution adopted by the General Assembly 56/112. Emergency Assistance to the Sudan; 12 February 2002.

[57] Also known as the Ottawa Convention.

support to the development of national mine action. A tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed by all parties on 19 September 2002[58].

Under the terms of the MoU, the UN agreed to help both parties to jointly develop a national mine action strategy to meet the immediate needs of the humanitarian situation and the longer-term post-conflict situation in the Sudan. A '*Sudan National Mine Action Strategic Framework*' was developed by all sides to the MoU and presented to an international audience in Nairobi on 24 August 2004. Both Sudanese parties requested immediate assistance to implement emergency mine action to reduce civilian casualties. Support was to be developed in three areas:

- Creation of a national mine action management capability.
- Direct, emergency intervention to address immediate needs and support immediate humanitarian requirements.
- Facilitate the development of an appropriate national NGO mine clearance capability.

A coordination dimension

A National Mine Action Office (NMAO) was created in Khartoum, the short-term aim of which was to plan activities in all areas in a way that ensures common standards. It was hoped that the NMAO might become a truly national co-ordination office at some time in the future serving all parts of Sudan.

A large United Nations Mine Action Office (UNMAO) — co-located with the NMAO — was created covering both north and south Sudan and it had the distinction of being largest mine action office in the world. However, the arrival of UNMAO was not universally welcomed by some mine action NGOs who felt they were being side-lined despite having been in the country long before UNMAO arrived. This view was not unique to the Sudan as the UN mine action response almost always lagged behind that of NGOs who, usually, felt they managed perfectly well without the UN. However, seeing all actors as partners, the NMAO opened its doors to all mine action agencies and offered them working space in the same building. Many mine action actors — now referred to as implementing partners — working in the north accepted the offer creating a level of national/UN/NGO co-ordination rarely seen in mine action.

Operations

The operations emerging from these co-ordination activities were numerous but three are particularly noteworthy:

Humanitarian aid accelerated although the mines situation in the south of the country was not well understood. A Landmine Impact Survey, first considered in June 2003, was commissioned by UNMAO but did not really start until 2006 and only completed in July 2009. It found that the landmine problem was largely confined to five of the 25 states, mostly to the south and east, with a total of 605 Suspected Hazard Areas throughout the country. Now the humanitarian agencies have a better understanding of the situation.

[58] Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Sudan, the Sudan People's Liberation Army Regarding United Nations Mine Action Service Support to Sudan. Signed by all parties on 19 September 2002.

A key factor in distributing humanitarian aid was road access along roads that were either impassable or suspected of being mined. This led to a two-pronged approach which became fairly common. Firstly, an 8 metre wide path was cleared of landmines by a South African company working for UNMAO mainly, but not only, to allow UN military teams better access. Secondly, many — if not all — roads were rebuilt to the status, and width, of main trunk roads. This work was commissioned by the World Food Programme (WFP) using a combination of mine clearance and road-reconstruction assets (a combination used also in Afghanistan).

Although a risk management approach to mine action was not new, after much discussion, it was employed in Sudan to a much greater extent than elsewhere. It was an evidence based system which used route survey to determine whether roads actually needed to be cleared as described above. If there was no evidence of mines, the road was opened allowing thousands of kilometres of roads to be released very quickly for use by UN agencies and NGOs.

Some important — and successful — cross-border co-operation took place in the Nuba Mountains where a mine action NGO undertook cross-line demining training with an initial 12 students each from GoS areas and SPLM areas. The students wore a common style of clothing and they worked together and lived in the same camp at a location accepted as neutral by both sides. Once training was finished for the day, the international instructors departed leaving the students together. The training was successfully completed although not too much was not expected from this co-operation as the situation between GoS and SPLM was still very fragile even in the Nuba Mountains. Nevertheless it was a ground-breaking initiative and was a demonstration of the unique part that could be played by mine action in the Sudan. Attempts to create 'Joint Implementation Units' — mixed teams permitted to work together on either side of the north-south border — were not successful

Each of these actions was designed to demonstrate a peace-dividend and each, in its way, did so. Whilst the politics of the situation remained complex these were examples where progress that mattered to people could be made. For many years the NMAO and UNMAO cross-border roles were made much more difficult because direct flight between Khartoum and Rumbek (the then capital in the south) were not permitted. Although UNMAO could remain effective, it made any real prospect of an effective NMAO very unlikely, and there is now no point anyway after the independence of South Sudan.

The impact of military missions

The UN military missions had a key role to play in how mine action developed. The best known mission is the UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) whose role is outside the scope of this paper. Its impact on mine action was three-fold:

- It required UNMAO operational support to enable troops to travel down roads considered mined. In most cases, as explained above, this was achieved by a commercial contractor clearing an 8 metre width along roads down which access was required.

- Some contributing nations provided military mine clearance teams which had to be accredited by UNMAO. These teams had a dual role of helping the mission undertake its mandate by doing some of the mine clearances required and, otherwise, undertaking work for humanitarian purposes.

- Perhaps the mission's most significant impact on mine action was budgetary. For many years, and still, more than 50% of all mine action funding in Sudan comes from the Assessed Budget.

There is another mission that deserves mention here. In the Nuba Mountains Ceasefire Agreement of 19 January 2002, the GoS and the SPLA agreed to an internationally monitored ceasefire between their forces in the Nuba Mountains for a renewable period of six months, with the broader objective of promoting a just, peaceful and comprehensive settlement of the conflict. The CFA, together with a Status of Mission Agreement, provided for the Joint Military Commission (JMC), which became operational in April 2002. The UN Security Council subsequently welcomed the establishment of the JMC and other monitoring mechanisms in Sudan[59]. What was commonly called 'the JMC' consisted in fact of two entities: the international Joint Monitoring Mission (JMM), which monitored compliance with the CFA and assisted in the disengagement and redeployment of combatants, and the JMC proper, also called the Chairman's Group, which decided whether an action constituted a cease-fire violation or not. The JMC Head of Mission had command and control over the joint monitoring teams, and simultaneously acted as the Chairman of the Chairman's Group. In addition, the JMC was supported by the Friends of Nuba Mountains, a group of 12 European and North American countries that funded the JMC and provided its unarmed international monitors. The support provided by the JMC/JMM was very important for the development of mine action in the Nuba Mountains. The extent of the goodwill it generated between both sides was remarkable and the physical support it provided mine action was considerable and vital.

The Present

So where does this leave mine action in the context of Sudan and what lessons are there to be learned? This short report was written after the independence of South Sudan and following a visit by a Joint Inspection Unit team (including the author) between 27 June and 1 July 2011 (just before actual independence). Two things stood out very clearly during the visit. Firstly, the respect given to UNMAO by everyone was remarkable and the extent of it is probably unique. Secondly, the challenge presented by the independence of South Sudan is daunting.

The respect given to UNMAO is well-earned but it has not been a smooth path. UN mine action in Sudan has had its share of problems at the political, technical and personal level. The politics have been complex and have at times seriously inhibited the effectiveness of co-ordination and operations. The uncertainty of what the actual landmines problem was over a vast country did not make long-term planning easy and sometimes led to an oversized co-ordination structure. The occasional mixture of strong personalities, egos and variable quality of mine action staff has not always been helpful. Yet out of this list of not uncommon problems has emerged a structure of uncommon effectiveness. There is no doubt — so far as mine action in Sudan is concerned — that UNMAO is in charge and that it shows effective leadership. Why this should be so is hard to determine but could be due to the combination of five factors: a very high international focus leading to — sometimes — timely decisions (the example of the Nuba Mountains is an important example); the presence of UNMIS whose mandate created an imperative for timely action; a plentiful supply of funding from the Assessed Budget and from international donors; a very clear-minded and strong senior management team in UNMAO employing

[59] Presidential Statement S/PRST/2003/16 of 10 October 2003.

competent and experienced technical advisors; the programme was fully managed by UNMAO in-country rather than — as was often the case elsewhere — from New York.

Sudan, to the north, will probably manage its own mine action into the future with limited support from the UN but there is no doubt that South Sudan is a continuing case requiring considerable UN and international support well into the future. It remains to be seen whether the country with its new found confidence after independence provides the conditions which will allow the UN to continue its support as effectively as has been the case so far. The same senior UN official mentioned at the beginning of this paper also said "*South Sudan could end up as a failure but it need not be so.*" No doubt mine action will continue to play its part in seeking a successful outcome for the country but it can only do so if there is sufficient political will from the Government of South Sudan and from the international community.

Annex II

Current resource capacities and programmes in mine action of UNMAS, UNDP and UNICEF

Entity	Financial resources (USD)		Staffing		No. of field programmes	Remarks
	HQ	Field	HQ	Field		
UNMAS	~4.5m	~160m	22	~110 Int. ~225 Nat.	22	○ Field programmes comprise 10 United Nations-managed and 2 United Nations-supported national programmes and 10 additional PKO/SPM programmes. ○ HQ staff only includes Professional staff. ○ UNOPS manages an additional 112 international and 520 national field staff on behalf of UNMAS.
UNDP		68.5m	17	40 Int. + UNDP contracted nationals	38	○ HQ staff is composed of 2 FTEs and 15 desk-support staff. ○ Field staff excludes national programme staff. ○ Budget for HQ is equivalent to the 2 FTEs. ○ Financial resources for field programmes are based on the UNDP appeal in the 2010 Portfolio. Funding for mine action is dynamic, and this figure represents an approximate annual budget for a typical year.
UNICEF	~24m		21	~24 Int. ~43 Nat.	31	○ UNICEF mine action work is integrated into its work on child protection. ○ Staff comprises only those working in programming, and not those providing operational support, resource mobilization or communications in support of mine action. ○ HQ staff includes only Professional staff. ○ Financial resources cover both HQ and field and are based on 2010 requirements. ○ HQ staff includes New York and regional centres.

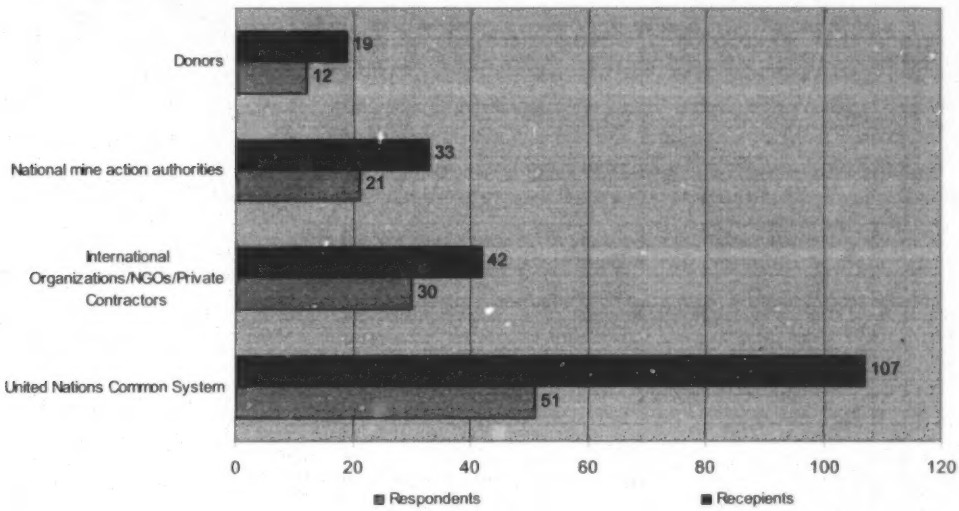
Source: Policy Committee Decision Update 6 May 2011, annex B, and relevant updates from individual IACG-MA members (status: 2 August 2011).

Annex III

Survey

Between 26 May and 17 June 2011, the Joint Inspection Unit conducted an electronic survey, in which a total of 201 representatives of the United Nations, national mine action authorities, donors, and international organizations/ NGOs/private contractors were invited to participate. The rationale behind choosing a non-randomized sampling technique was to include stakeholders the Inspectors had already met in the course of the review as well as stakeholders not yet considered. The survey represents an important source of information in addition to the desk review and missions, and therefore provides for the triangulation of sources "to increase the accuracy of the data" and "to strengthen findings".[60]

Breakdown of recipients and respondents to the JIU electronic survey (by group of stakeholders):



[60] Linda G. Morra-Imas; Ray C. Rist, *The Road to Results: Designing and Conducting Effective Development Evaluations* (Washington D.C., World Bank, 2009), p. 300.

Annex IV

List of interviewees

The Inspectors carried out extended interviews with officials from the following entities:

United Nations Common System:
- DPKO/ OROLSI
- OCHA Country Office Colombia
- OCHA Country Office Sudan (Juba)
- OHCHR Country Office Colombia
- UNODA
- UNDP HQ
- UNDP Country Office Albania
- UNDP Country Office Bosnia and Herzegovina
- UNDP Country Office Cambodia
- UNDP Country Office Colombia
- UNDP Country Office Lao People's Democratic Republic
- UNDP Country Office Nicaragua
- UNDP Country Office Sudan (Juba)
- UNHCR HQ
- UNHCR Country Office Colombia
- UNICEF HQ
- UNICEF Country Office Albania
- UNICEF Country Office Bosnia and Herzegovina
- UNICEF Country Office Cambodia
- UNICEF Country Office Colombia
- UNICEF Country Office Lao People's Democratic Republic
- UNICEF Country Office Nicaragua
- UNICEF Country Office Sudan (Juba)
- UNMAO Sudan (Juba)
- UNMAS HQ
- UNMAS Country Office Colombia
- UNODC Country Office Lao People's Democratic Republic
- United Nations Mission in Sudan Juba
- UNOPS
- WFP Country Office Colombia
- WFP Country Office Lao People's Democratic Republic
- World Bank

International organizations:
- Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining
- Implementation Support Unit
- International Committee of the Red Cross HQ
- International Committee of the Red Cross Colombia Office
- International Committee of the Red Cross New York Delegation
- International Trust Fund for Demining and Mine Victims Assistance Bosnia and Herzegovina Office
- Organization of American States Washington
- Organization of American States Nicaragua Office

NGOs/private contractors:
- ALB-AID
- Campaña Colombiana Contra Minas
- Centro Integral de Rehabilitación de Colombia
- Danish Church Aid HQ
- G4S Juba Office
- Handicap International
- Handicap International Lao People's Democratic Republic Office
- HALO Trust Office Cambodia
- International Campaign to Ban Landmines
- International Campaign to Ban Landmines Nicaragua
- Jesuit Services/ Cambodian Campaign to Ban Landmines
- MECHEM Juba Office
- Mines Action Canada
- Mines Advisory Group HQ
- Mines Advisory Group Cambodia Office
- Mines Advisory Group Lao People's Democratic Republic Office
- Mines Advisory Group Juba Office
- Mine Tech International Juba Office
- Norwegian People's Aid HQ
- Norwegian People's Aid Bosnia and Herzegovina Office
- Norwegian People's Aid Juba Office
- Sudan Integrated Mine Action Service
- Operation Landmine Action and Victim Support

Donors:

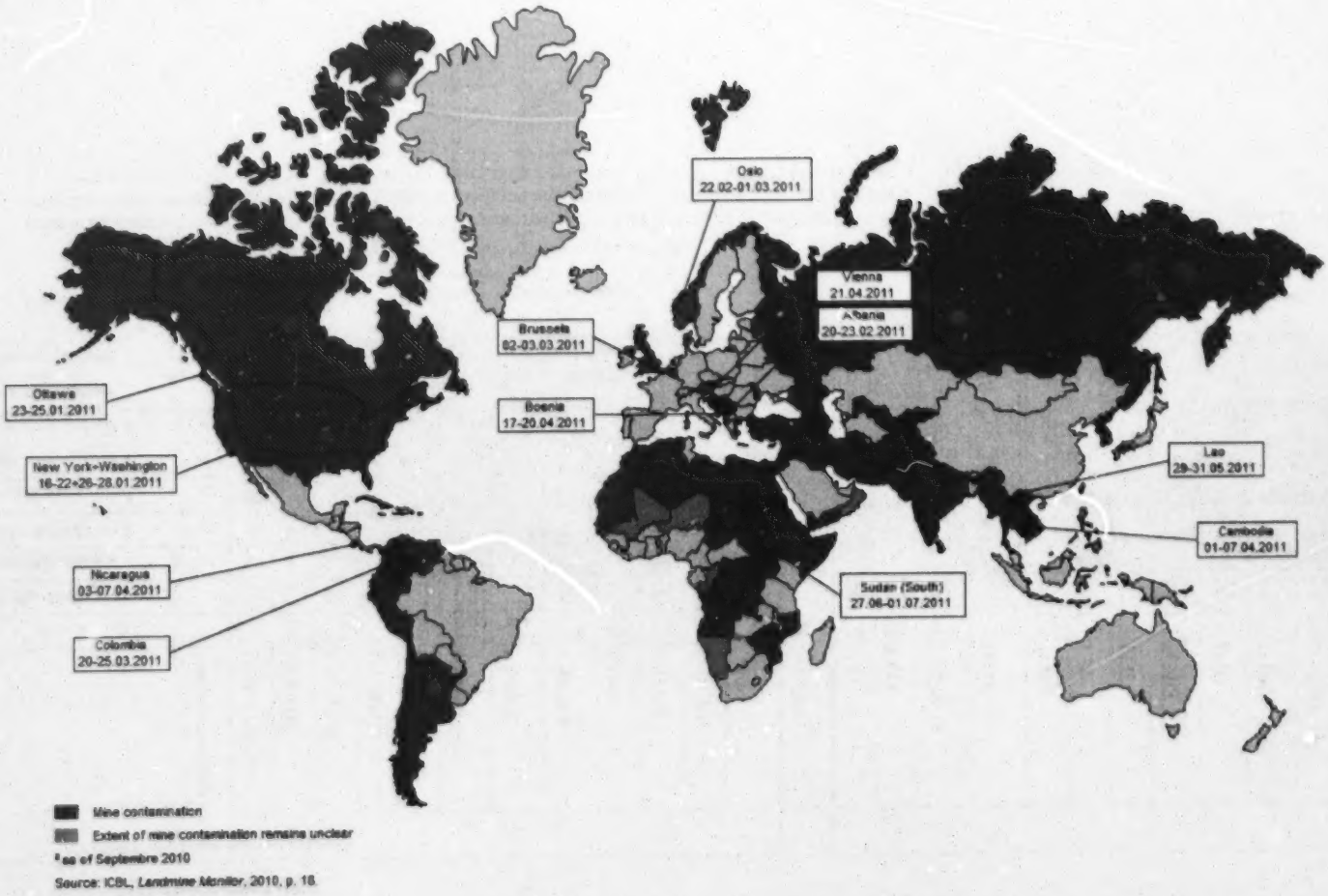
- AusAID Cambodia Office
- AusAID Lao People's Democratic Republic Office
- Austrian Foreign Ministry
- Canadian International Development Agency
- Canadian International Development Agency Cambodia Office
- Canadian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Trade
- Delegation of the European Union to Lao People's Democratic Republic
- European Commission Directorate General for Enlargement
- European Commission Directorate General for Development and Cooperation — EuropeAid
- European Union European External Action Service
- European Commission Humanitarian Aid Department Juba Office
- Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation Lao People's Democratic Republic Office
- United States Department of State
- United States Embassy Lao People's Democratic Republic

National mine action authorities:

- Albanian Mine Action Executive
- Albanian Ministry of Defence
- Albanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Prefecture of Kukes Region, Albania
- Bosnia and Herzegovina Demining Commission
- Bosnia and Herzegovina Mine Action Center
- Bosnian and Herzegovina Ministry of Defence
- Cambodian Mine Action and Victim Assistant Authority
- Cambodian Mine Action Centre
- Instituto Nacional de Desminagem Mozambique
- Instituto Nacional Tecnológico Nicaragua
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Lao People's Democratic Republic
- National Regulatory Authority Lao People's Democratic Republic
- National Mine Action Center Sudan
- Nicaraguan Ministry of Defence
- Nicaraguan National Demining Commission
- Programa Presidencial para la Acción Integral contra Minas Antipersonal Colombia
- UXO Lao
- South Sudan Demining Authority

Annex V*

World map of missions undertaken for the review



* Reproduced as received.

Annex VI

Overview of action to be taken by participating organizations on JIU recommendations

JIU/REP/2011/11

	Intended impact	United Nations*	OHCHR	UNCTAD	UNODC	UNEP	UN-Habitat	UNHCR	UNRWA	UNDP	UNFPA	UNICEF	WFP	UNOPS	ILO	FAO	UNESCO	ICAO	WHO	UPU	ITU	WMO	IMO	WIPO	UNIDO	UNWTO	IAEA
For action		☒	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☒	☐	☒	☒	☒	☐	☒	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
For information		☐	☐	☒	☒	☒	☒	☐	☒	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☒	☒	☐	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒
*Recommendation 1***	a	E	E					E		E		E	E	E		E			E								
Recommendation 2	e	E																									
Recommendation 3	c	E																									
Recommendation 4	e	E																									
Recommendation 5	e	E																									
Recommendation 6	g	E																									
Recommendation 7	a	L																									

Legend: **L:** Recommendation for decision by legislative organ
E: Recommendation for action by executive head
■ Recommendation does not require action by this organization

Intended impact: **a:** enhanced accountability **b:** dissemination of best practices **c:** enhanced coordination and cooperation **d:** enhanced controls and compliance **e:** enhanced effectiveness **f:** significant financial savings **g:** enhanced efficiency **o:** other

* Covers all entities listed in ST/SGB/2002/11 other than UNCTAD, UNODC, UNEP, UN-Habitat, UNHCR and UNRWA.